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HAVANA MAÑANA



A GUIDE TO CUBA  
AND THE CUBANS



CONSUELO HERMER  
AND  
MARJORIE MAY



RANDOM HOUSE · NEW YORK

FIRST PRINTING

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*To our Mark, he made it*



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## Foreword

MOST TRAVEL BOOKS take you far, but usually not far enough. Too often they include too much historical material, too little about the facts of life. Knowledge of any city, after all, is written in terms of its people, its food, its customs. Take Havana, now.

There have been no books about Havana that make its people real to us. If Americans consider the Cubans "touched," they, in their turn, sum us up as *Americanos locos*. But the Cubans, at least, admire the stuff Americans are made of, even though it defies their analysis. It's time for visitors to return the compliment, to be more open-minded and less jingoistic. The geniality and gracious dignity of life in Havana and the mercurial charm of its inhabitants deserve understanding and appreciation.

There have been no books about Havana that guide tourists through the complicated maze of Cuban etiquette. Warm-hearted and easy-going though he may be, your true Cuban resents any transgression of the rules of his social code. The bad impressions left by Americans on a spree cry to heaven for correction.

There have been no books about Havana that show tourists how to get more than their money's worth out of shopping, eating, sightseeing and night-clubbing, how to spend intelligently, how to save wisely, how to have fun on even the most limited budget.

These pages try to demonstrate that there is much more than rum, *rumba* and revolution in Cuba; to indicate the pattern of behavior that furthers social success in this unpredictable but always enchanting country; to turn the spotlight on Cuban customs and the Latin way of looking at life. Understanding all this will mean keener appreciation of your experiences there, richer memories and a sympathy for Havana that make the place unforgettably warm and colorful.

HAVANA MAÑANA





## *One, If by Land . . .*

WE LOVE HAVANA. We get positively rhapsodic talking about the city. To us, its name is a synonym for magic, romance, joy, glamour—all in capitals. There are those who disagree, often, we prefer to think, out of incomplete knowledge or sheer intolerance. Pro or con, the violence of the opinions it arouses is proof enough that Havana is a place that has strong character.

Your reactions to Havana will be your own affair. We say: go with an open mind. Within reach of our own shores is this completely foreign country, as remote in culture and customs as Spain, as glittering as Rio, as picturesque as Mexico, yet completely and conveniently accessible.

Havana is like a woman in love. Eager to give pleasure, she will be anything you want her to be—exciting or peaceful, gay or quiet, brilliant or

tranquil. What is your fancy? She is only too anxious to anticipate your desires, to charm you with her beauty. Go prepared to enjoy yourself, and you will leave loving her as deeply as any native son.

Any time of the year is ideal in Cuba, we think. Custom and fashion have made December through March the smart season, but the temperature, which rarely climbs over eighty-eight or drops below fifty, makes Havana comfortable at any month. Even on the hottest days, the trade winds blow, fanning the city with refreshing salt-laden breezes; shaded sidewalks protect you from the sun's glare and dusk brings about a ten-degree drop in temperature. As a matter of fact, we found summer in Havana a blessed relief from the steaming Turkish-bath atmosphere of New York City, and were amused by Cuban friends who complained of the heat. They don't know what real heat is! The rainy season extends from June to October, but the almost daily showers start and end within an hour, leaving the streets scrubbed and the houses shining. So there is no need to worry about tropical downpours. In summer, when the hordes of tourists depart and the natives reclaim their city, Havana's veneer of Americanism disappears and she becomes again a regal Spanish beauty with Old World stateliness and charm.

No passports are needed for travel to Cuba. You may stay as long as six months on a tourist landing card (for identification). After that, you take on the status of a foreign resident and as such must reg-



ister with the Bureau of Foreign Registration in the Department of the Interior.

How will you go? There are a half dozen ways. Go by air for speed. Go by sea for rest and relaxation. Or go to Miami by train or boat or bus or car, then cross the Gulf of Mexico by Clipper or overnight boat.

**BY TRAIN:** One of the most inexpensive routes is via special-rate coach train to Miami and then across the Gulf of Mexico on an overnight P & O (Peninsular and Occidental Steamship Company) boat. The Seaboard Air Line Railroad runs the Silver Meteor daily, a comfortable air-conditioned coach train from New York, at the special rate of \$40.35 for a fifteen-day round trip. A ticket good for six months is \$43.85.

These special Florida-bound coaches have comfortable chairs that recline at night, and the porter will get you a pillow for twenty-five cents. It's a good idea for women to pack a dark housecoat at the top of their dressing cases, and, when it's bedtime, make use of the nicely appointed dressing room and change. The Silver Meteor's diners serve remarkably inexpensive meals (a complete dinner is only sixty cents), or you may order *à la carte*. There are well-equipped club cars with a bar where you may read, sip a drink, write a note, or tune the radio to a tropical wave-length for a preliminary taste of Cuban music. A hostess is on duty at all times if you feel the need for companionship. She's

a registered nurse, to boot. You can bring only two pieces of luggage into the car with you; the rest must be checked through on your ticket. Eighty pounds are permitted, all told. The trip takes slightly more than twenty-five hours.

The Orange Blossom Special will take you to Miami from New York, Pullman class, for \$90.25, round trip, including a lower berth. A drawing-room will stand you an additional \$36.00. For this sum you get a greater amount of comfort, privacy and attention, but, frankly, the trip is far duller.

Residents of Cincinnati, Chicago, Detroit, and Cleveland can travel to Miami on the Florida Seaboard beam, which carries both coaches and Pullmans. A list of fares will be found in the Appendix.

Remember that you will have to transfer yourself from the railroad station to the P & O docks. Be sure to take a cab with a meter; the others try to extort as high a tariff as possible, rates being governed to some extent by the amount of baggage. You shouldn't pay more than a dollar.

You'll find the P & O boats comfortable and in not too great a hurry. Accommodations are adequate; dinner and breakfast are appetizing. There's a nice feeling of informality about this overnight jaunt, almost as though you were on a ferry boat, since the vessels go back and forth four times a week. Thirty-two dollars a round trip, and less out of season, is the cost of a six-months ticket. There's a tax of eighty-two cents, too, that goes to the Cuban Government. P & O boats also sail twice a week

from Tampa (an eighteen-hour trip) and Key West (six hours).

BY PLANE: Air-minded tourists will enjoy the Clipper flight from Miami to Havana. It costs \$4.00 more than the P & O boat, but the course over the ocean to the Florida Keys is a thrilling sight from the air, and the speed of the journey (about two hours) is something to consider, too. Remember you're limited to fifty-five pounds of baggage free of charge, and extra-poundage costs are high. Cameras are not allowed in these planes; so if you're carrying yours, prepare to have it requisitioned. It will be returned at the end of the trip.

Biscuits, with tomato juice, cocoa or coffee are served during the trip, and you can study the blue depths of the Gulf Stream and be complacent about missing the sometimes tricky crossing.

Going all the way by air takes ten hours from New York via Eastern Air Lines (twelve hours from Chicago) and costs \$129.00 for the round trip to Miami, plus Clipper fare over and back. Fare from San Francisco to Miami is \$207.00, one way. Passengers are pampered, of course. The stewards hold your hand if you're nervous, surround you with pillows and blankets if you want to sleep, give you cotton plugs for your ears (it doesn't help a bit) and answer your endless questions. Chewing gum is good flying etiquette, by the way. It helps to relieve pressure on your ear drums, they claim. Should you have trouble, try swallowing hard or sipping a

glass of water slowly. Meals are excellent and are included in the passage cost. Tipping is taboo. And remember to empty your fountain-pen before you start! The pressure at high altitudes sometimes bursts the ink sac. A schedule of fares from principal cities in the States will be found in the Appendix.

When you reach Miami you will have to transport yourself and your luggage by cab to Cocoonut Grove to catch the Clipper—a twenty-minute trip that costs around two dollars.

Applications from several major airlines for new charters are now on file with the Civil Aeronautics Board in the Department of Commerce at Washington. One such projected route is New York-Washington-Havana; another is Tampa-Key West-Havana. Plans are being formulated for regular flights from New York to Havana, via New Orleans, this under the aegis of the American Export Lines; in fact, test flights for this route have already been made. Once these air routes are established, Cuba will be almost within commuting distance of the U.S.A. New York, for instance, will be only eight hours from Havana as the sea gull flies; so a Friday-to-Monday week-end abroad will be practical, physically, though perhaps not financially.

**BY BOAT:** If you live near the West Coast you can get a boat to Havana from San Francisco, for

the American President Line ships make monthly sailings. The trip takes about thirteen days and the minimum fare is \$110.00, one way. Or if New Orleans is a good jumping-off spot for you, take one of the boats of the United Fruit or Standard Fruit Companies from that city; both have regular weekly sailings. Round-trip passage via United Fruit is \$75.00; going via Standard Fruit costs \$75.00, one way. If you want to get away from people, the Lykes cargo boats ply down weekly from Houston, Texas, carrying only eight or ten passengers, at a one-way fare of \$48.00. Other cargo boats put out from New York, Boston and Baltimore, but in every case, the trip is fairly slow. The New York and Cuba Mail Line boats go back and forth weekly and the line is dear to the hearts of Havana-New York commuters. Passage is \$110.00, minimum, for a round trip, with unlimited stop-over privileges, \$75.00 for the six-day cruise which allows a day and a night in Havana. Cuba Mail also offers a two-week cruise that gives you eight days in Havana at a minimum cost of \$113.00, including hotel room and breakfast.

Besides the Cuba Mail, the spotless cargo vessels of the United Fruit Line go down from New York each week, charging \$110.00, minimum, for the round trip. And many luxurious ocean liners, now in West Indies and South American cruise service, include Havana in their itineraries. If you're coming up from South America, the Chilean

Line stops at Havana. These boats can take you home to the States from Cuba, too, at \$60.00 for the trip. It's only a one-way line, however.

Except for the cargo boats mentioned, the ships that bring you to Havana are comfortable modern vessels, large enough to give the luxury-liner feeling, small enough so that passengers can learn the layouts and find their way around without any to-do. It requires about two and a half days for the voyage from New York.

Once on board, the only necessary additional expenditure is for tips. Ten per cent of the one-way fare is the right total to give, the greater part going to room and table stewards who really give you most attention. Tip the stewardess and deck steward, too, or anyone else who has been helpful. If you want a deck chair, the charge is about a dollar.

Other reminders are: don't dress for dinner the first night out (unless you're grimly determined to dress on the slightest provocation), and be sure to keep your stateroom locked at all times. Any amount of luggage is permitted, but we earnestly urge you to think twice before bringing a trunk; several pieces of hand luggage, instead, will be more convenient and less expensive.

The days at sea pass pleasantly, but they soon come to an end. Before you know it the magnificent entrance to Havana harbor is glittering with light. It is even better than its picture-postcard counterparts; so don't miss it by over-sleeping or because of last-minute packing.

OTHER ROUTES: Many people drive to Miami and ship their cars over on the P & O Line at a cost of \$32.00. From Key West, P & O charges \$24.00 for your machine. These rates apply to cars weighing up to 3000 pounds. There is no red tape to wrestle with, no license to obtain in Cuba. All you need are your home-state registration papers and your driver's license. A representative of the Tourist Commission meets all boats and clears cars speedily. But please consider the cost of gasoline in Cuba—about thirty cents a gallon—before you decide that the car must be taken along.

Still another route to Miami is via bus. The ubiquitous Greyhound Line takes you there from New York for only \$15.90 (one way) and has special tours to Florida arranged from principal cities in every part of the country. Other bus lines also run inexpensive trips to Florida, especially during the winter season.

*Advice:* One expenditure we'd recommend, no matter how you travel, is baggage insurance. For the small expense involved, it is a good investment in peace of mind.

Over the ocean or through the clouds, you've arrived. Have your landing card handy for going through Quarantine. Throw away left-over fruit or flowers; you can't bring them in, due to Quarantine regulations. When porters carry off your lug-

gage, you're required to tip a minimum of a *peseta* (twenty cents) for each piece.

Now you've got to run the gauntlet of Customs. Make up your mind that this will take time unless Spanish-speaking friends meet you, which may magically speed up the procedure. Havana Customs inspectors are chatty and may make a more thorough inspection of your wardrobe than is actually required. Like everybody else in Cuba, they adore American fashions and foibles. If you indulge in French lingerie or Sulka ties, prepare to see them on parade. The man who went through our luggage was reluctant to let us go. He pulled out all our Gauguin-print nighties and called several confrères over to join in a chorus of praise. And once, when we had come up from Panama, the purchases we'd made there were the subject of reproachful comment on the part of our inspector. He was cut to the heart that we'd spent so much money before we got to Havana!

Customs closes from eleven to one for lunch; so if you are in their toils then, drop everything and go out for a preview of the city.

To get to your hotel, a guide car from the enclosure right next to the Customs shed must be used. This costs one dollar, plus twenty cents for each piece of baggage, and another dollar for each trunk. No other cars are available; in fact, the Government confines pier-to-hotel taxi service to these guide cars. When you unload at your hotel, tipping



to the same tune is in order—twenty cents for each bag. And the same when you leave.

There is no lack of hotels, varying from huge, modern affairs to modest European-type pensions. The season extends from December through March; hotel rates go down considerably from April through November. Most of the hotels have English-speaking desk clerks, telephone operators and bell-boys trained to give service in the great American tradition.

If you want ultra-sybarite atmosphere plus serene quiet and an unparalleled view of the blue sky and sea, the Hotel Nacional de Cuba is for you. The beauty of its far-flung gardens is legendary. The tiled pool, tennis courts, handsomely landscaped grounds, luxurious lobbies and dining rooms, all put this hotel in a class with the most gilded American resorts. Considered the smartest hotel in Cuba, the Nacional is situated on a high bluff at the city's edge, where Santa Clara Battery used to stand and some of the old guns still mount guard. This is just where Vedado (the fine residential section) begins; so trips to and from town must be by cab, at forty cents a trip.

In addition to the swimming pool on its grounds, the Nacional maintains a beach club, complete with perambulating bar, dance floor and glass-enclosed dining room, all for the enjoyment of guests. This is about fifteen minutes from town, and transportation to and from the hotel is free. There is a locker

charge of sixty cents, while *cabañas* cost two dollars. Guests may invite their friends, but the club is not open to the general public.

If you like to be in the bustling center of things, the Sevilla-Biltmore is a logical choice, one block from the famous tree-lined Prado, just a step from the shops, restaurants and theaters, readily accessible by bus, trolley or taxi. A cab trip from the Sevilla to any place within the city is only twenty cents. A bit older than the Nacional, not quite as sumptuous, the Sevilla still is a completely modern hotel, as popular with upper-class Latin-American visitors as it is with North Americans. All rooms are built around a large open patio for the sake of airiness. There is another patio, tiled in vivid colors, where a fountain splashes and an old, covered wishing-well adds to the picturesque effect. This adjoins the dining room and so is the center of much of the city's social life. During the winter season the roof-garden is open for lunch and dinner and is a favorite spot for those large balls the Cubans are so fond of giving.

Despite its size, the Sevilla specializes in personalized service—always a comfort when you're in a strange country. Particularly we want to give a special vote of thanks to the three graces of the switchboard, Carmita, Caridad and Consuelo, who function as information clerks, social secretaries and telephone operators, all in one, with unfailing good humor and discretion. They make or break appointments for you, dig up anyone in town you've been

unable to locate, track you down like the Northwest Mounted if something important breaks, or lie like troopers for you whenever things get too complicated. They're the G-girls of Havana, probably the most important ganglia in the hotel's nervous system!

If you are clock-striking conscious, shun rooms on the south side of the hotel, where, in an adjacent lot, stands the Polar Beer Company's sign (a hec-tically tinted volcano of endlessly pouring beer), crowned by a clock. All night long, a little polar bear rides around the clock on a bicycle, busily striking every quarter hour!

Ten minutes from town, in Vedado, is the Presidente, on a breeze-swept corner right by the sea. Small and friendly, this has all the modern features of a large hotel. It is a favorite with honeymooners because of the quiet and the pleasant garden where guests can sun and lounge. During the season, the roof-garden, with its fine view of the city and harbor, is open for lunch and dinner.

Attention, golf-fiends! If you have a friend who belongs to the Havana Country Club, or if you are a member of a club in the States with affiliations, you can stay there in excellent style. The surroundings—beautiful Country Club Park—are idyllic, the accommodations and cuisine excellent and the sporty course just five minutes from your bedroom.

Twenty miles from the city is Rio Cristal, an old nunnery with beautiful gardens sloping down to the Cristal River. It is conducted as a restaurant

now, but there are also a few cottages for rent at extremely low rates by the week or month, American plan. If you are looking for rest, quiet, sports like fishing, canoeing or swimming, plus Eden-like surroundings, Rio Cristal is the place for you.

The Lincoln, Park View, Inglaterra and Plaza are city hotels catering to tourist economy. Facing Parque Central, the Inglaterra, once Havana's best, still keeps an Old World air, with its tremendous rooms and mellow tiling. The Plaza, right on one of the city's liveliest corners, had the first roof-garden in Havana. Like the Lincoln and the Park View (which are newer), this is a more commercial establishment.

There are many other less pretentious hotels with adequate facilities and service. We recommend them for men or for couples who don't demand fuss and flummery, but not for women alone, since most are located in the older sections of town, where there is more difficulty in getting around at night. In this category, for a real, honest-to-goodness slice of Cuban life, try the old Ambos Mundos Hotel, favorite of Ernest Hemingway and many other writers. This has a charming roof-garden restaurant opening onto a terrace gay with flower beds and vines. Unquestionably, the view from here is best of all; at one glance you take in Morro, Cristo Church, and the City Hall. It's quiet here, only the upper stories being in use, and all the rooms have tiny balconies. While the Ambos Mundos is not at all pretentious, accommodations are quite

adequate, and there is excellent maintenance, since the hotel is owner-managed. Across the street is the Ambos Mundos restaurant and bar which draw many business men at lunch time.

Then there is the Florida Hotel in a narrowly small but tall building, hard by the corner where the Floridita bar carries on busily; also the Lafayette, which draws many Mexican visitors. The Hotel Union, simple and small, is another possibility. Rates for these establishments average about two dollars a day for room and bath, during the season, and are commensurately economical on the American plan.

There are several pensions in the city and in Vedado. The Trotcha Hotel, with fabulously lovely gardens, is run as a pension now. There is an Old-New Orleans mood to this huge sprawling structure that rambles everywhere. Outside the big iron gate and the high wall, traffic courses along Calzada. Inside, no sound breaks the stillness but the dreamy splashing of the fountains, thick with maidenhair fern.

Besides the Trotcha, there are several pleasant pensions in Vedado, only a few minutes from town. The Savoy is a large mansion with wide verandas and spacious gardens. The Hotel Vedado has a grand ocean view from its terrace and porches. At Eighth and Nineteenth Streets is the Apartment Hotel, which also has garage facilities. Rates on the

American plan are good buys for all of these—for extended stays, about \$50.00 a month and up.

Wherever you decide to stay, hotel or pension, the rooms will be large and airy and you'll marvel at the height of the ceilings. Don't be surprised to find a strange man in your room! All the hotels use chambermen—*camareros*—instead of chambermaids. Keep your shutters closed unless you wish to rise early. If the brilliant sun doesn't pierce your dreams, the song-pitched cries of the street-vendors certainly will.

Taking a furnished apartment or house is worth serious consideration if you're down for a month or longer. We were able to sublet a large, bright, seven-room flat with a terrace-like balcony, on Prado, for only \$80.00 a month with maid service. This was an exceptional value, but perfectly comfortable three- and four-room apartments are available for about \$50.00 a month, gas, electricity and service costing extra, of course. A really beautiful seven-room apartment in Vedado, furnished, rents for about \$75.00 a month, and a furnished house of this size, with a garden, would be about \$100.00. In the Country Club or Miramar sections (exclusive suburbs of the city), such a house would cost \$130.00 a month, slightly more if you wanted to be on beautiful Quinta Avenida. And if you are ready to splurge, mansions are plentiful, with magnificent

gardens and settings, some with their own swimming pools, for much lower rentals than comparable homes would bring in the States. We visited a family residing in General Mendieta's home (he was a former President of Cuba) on Quinta Avenida, a large green stucco mansion with a wonderful inner patio, furnished with priceless French antiques. All of this was a mere \$200.00 a month. If you want a streamlined setting, there are plenty of modern houses to be had; in fact most of the buildings going up today are modern. Frankly, we like the rococo palaces better; they're much more in accord with the Cuban scene than pared-to-the-bone modern.

Domestic servants in Havana are incredibly cheap according to American standards. A skilled cook gets from \$15.00 to \$25.00 a month, a nursemaid or maid-of-all-work about \$15.00. Part-time maids can be had for as little as \$7.00 a month. You will find that the servants adopt themselves into the family and take genuine pride in giving painstaking and personal service. Down here, the relationship between Madame and her hired help is closer and friendlier; so don't be startled to find your *criada* taking an active interest in your comings and goings, even bragging to the neighbors' cook about your social life.

If you have a flat in the city, buses, trolleys and taxis get you around at slight expense. With a house in the suburbs, though, a car is almost a

necessity. Also, it would be inadvisable to take a house unless you have friends in residence and unless you can secure a guest card for one of the beach or country clubs.

But whether you take a furnished apartment or house, unless you're extremely lucky, you'll find the furniture reminiscent of Dr. Caligari's Cabinet, all angles and contortions, devastatingly, Frenchily modern. It's disappointing to see the old, lovely rosewood or mahogany period furniture with canework, so decorative and so suitable for the climate, discarded in favor of the new, inevitably triangular pieces with phantasmagoric upholstery. Exquisite old rock-crystal chandeliers go for a song at second-hand stores. In their place, Cubans dote on wonderful and terrible modern fixtures, all chromium and glass, or lamps with octagonal, fringed, beaded shades, and the more vari-colored globes the merrier! Of course, this modern mania for clutter is not universal. When a Cuban home is decorated with taste, then it's far ahead of an American home on the same scale. Many Havana residences are carefully furnished in a manner true to the country and climate. We hope you'll be lucky enough to get a glimpse of one.

"My house is yours!" is what the Cubans say, to sum up their welcome, and whether you make Havana your home for little or long, Cuban hospitality envelops the visitor in a warm and pleasant aura of friendliness.





CUBAN TOURIST COMMISSION

AERIAL VIEW OF HAVANA, SHOWING THE CAPITOL.



CUBAN TOURIST COMMISSION

## INTELLIGENCE SERVICE

Petty annoyances that take toll of your good nature as well as your time can be avoided in Havana if you have advance information. In a valiant effort to further amicable Cuban-American relations, we list below all the odds and ends of information which tourists should know and usually don't.

**CIGARETTES:** Tourists are allowed to bring two cartons of cigarettes through Cuban Customs, duty-free. Give the inspector who stamps your cigarettes one pack from each carton. That's his *lagniappe*! Take advantage of this allowance, for American cigarettes cost twenty-five cents a pack in Havana (forty cents in night clubs) and Cuban cigarettes are black and rank. Natives themselves say that Havana cigars are the best in the world and Havana cigarettes the worst!

**MATCHES** are not free. Five cents a box is what you pay, and odorous wax lucifers with an annoying trick of backfiring are what you get. Be sure to bring along that lighter you never bother to use at home; it will save wear and tear on your disposition. Aside to the thrifty: the French Doll gives away matches (American-type matches at that) when you make purchases there. It's the only shop we found that does so. And two restaurants, La Zaragozana and La Floridita, will grudgingly hand over a pack of matches if you demand them.

**ELECTRICAL IMPLEMENTS:** Leave American-made electric razors, curling irons, pressing irons,

heating pads or radios behind you. Since the current is different in Havana, they'll be useless. Even with converters they rarely work.

**SUNBURN PREVENTATIVES:** Don't forget your favorite tanning or anti-burn lotion. Cuba's sun is blazing even in the late afternoon or when skies are overcast. Sun glasses are also a necessity.

**FILMS** are imported from the U.S.A. and therefore cost about twice as much as they do at home. Bring yours with you. Developing, however, is inexpensive and expert; so if you have time it is worthwhile to have your films developed here. El Encanto, which gives twenty-four-hour service, does better work than most run-of-the-mill photographic stores in the States, and there are large Kodak and Agfa stores too.

**RATE OF EXCHANGE:** The Cuban *peso* is equivalent to our dollar and has the same par value. Actually, however, it is worth anywhere from four to fourteen cents less, depending on daily market fluctuations. Change your money as soon as you get to Havana; you'll save on all transactions, for even when prices are quoted in dollars, payment is made in *pesos*. As a matter of fact, should anyone insist on receiving American money, a gentle reminder is in order that it's against the law to refuse Cuban currency as legal tender. Banks and the American Express Company's offices are the only places where you get the benefit of the rate of exchange; so don't change money elsewhere. Hotels, stores, restaurants—all blandly ignore the fluctuations of the *peso*.

Silver money is minted in denominations of one, two, five, ten, twenty and forty cents. *Centavo* is one cent, *real* a dime and *peseta* twenty cents, *dos pesetas* being forty cents. *Quilo* is slang for penny and *medio* for nickel.

POSTAGE: Air-mail going to the United States costs ten cents per half-ounce, and letters going by air should be mailed before one P.M. to reach their destination the following day. Regular first-class mail, which takes about a week to arrive, is three cents, and postcards (no telling when they'll be received) two. During December and January an additional one-cent stamp, issued by the Government for the benefit of tuberculosis control, must be affixed to all mail. Don't neglect this, otherwise your letters will never be received.

PARCEL POST: Take along everything you need or think you will need. Don't on the spur of the moment wire home for another dress or an extra pair of shoes. If you do receive packages from the States, be prepared to spend hours at the post-office. The amount of red tape is limited only by the ingenuity of the Cuban mind—and that's practically limitless. All kinds of forms have to be filled out, and you must be resigned to paying duty, no matter what the package contains. The Government exacts tribute even if you swear the contents are only for personal use; even if it's only worn clothing you're receiving.

CARS FOR HIRE: There are two types of vehicles for hire: public taxis and guide cars driven by

English-speaking (?) chauffeurs licensed by the Tourist Commission. At the risk of bringing the wrath of Havana's chauffeurs down upon our heads, we suggest that you use taxis whenever possible. Unless you want to hire a car for a full day and night, cabs (modern, comfortable sedans) are much cheaper. Their rates are fixed at twenty cents a zone; so there is a definite saving on short trips. From any point within the city limits (the first zone) to Vedado, the second zone, is only forty cents, by cab. Incidentally, for transportation purposes, the city of Havana is divided into three zones. The first extends from the waterfront up to Calle Belascoain; the second, from Belascoain to Infanta; and the third from Infanta to the end of Vedado. The principal Havana suburbs include Vedado, Miramar, Jesus del Monte, Santos Suares, Vibora and Cerro, and trips to the more outlying points are charged for according to mileage. It's best to make your rate with the driver in advance. When you want a taxi, hail only those with the *se aquila* 20 (for hire, twenty cents) sign in front. Unmarked cabs in front of hotels sometimes charge more.

On the other hand, guide cars (usually the open touring-car variety and a bit on the ramshackle side, too) charge as much as the traffic will bear, despite the fact that rates supposedly are fixed by the Tourist Commission. Bargaining is an unpleasant necessity but you must stand pat. The chauffeur always comes down from his original price. If, however, you're out for a full day and night of

sightseeing, a guide car is more practical, though most of the taxis will make a daily rate, too. Ten dollars is all you should pay.

**TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM:** Use buses and trolleys whenever possible. Havana's efficient transportation service gets you almost any place you want to go, for a five-cent fare. The hotel, Tourist Police or Tourist Commission will tell you what number bus or trolley to use to get to a given address. Going to *La Playa* (the public bathing beach), twelve miles from town, is just as quick by bus (32 is the number) as by guide car which will charge \$3.00 for the round trip.

**STREET NAMES AND NUMBERS:** A couple of years ago, the Government in one of its flights of whimsy, changed the names of virtually all the streets and renumbered the houses. Cubans paid no attention. They go on paying no attention. This makes it slightly difficult to locate addresses; no resident ever recognizes a street by its new name. How can you find *Avenida de Belgica* when Cubans persist in calling it *Calle Monserrate*? What good is an address for *Avenida de Americas* when it's still *Quinta Avenida* to the natives? In the same faithful manner, everybody uses the old house numbers, though addresses in phone books and on letterheads are the new. Sometimes, in an effort to be helpful, people will even list both numbers, and then you have to decide which is which. In making appointments, find out in advance whether you have the old or the new address. And if you have been given the

new address, get the old one, too, in case you or your taxi driver must ask directions.

THE TOURIST COMMISSION maintains offices on the Prado (now called Paseo de Martí!) in the Sevilla-Biltmore Hotel and is at the disposal of visitors who want information about the city, suggestions for sightseeing or help of any kind. Don't be shy about asking assistance there; fifty cents of the tax you pay the Cuban Government before entering the country goes for the upkeep of this office. It's really all yours.

DRIVING YOUR OWN CAR within the city limits is an undertaking not to be tackled unless you have nerves of steel. The speed limit on the highways is forty-three miles an hour; in town it seems to be regulated only by the amount of traffic. Driving rules and signals used in the States, including right-hand driving, are in force. The manner of driving is something else again. There are traffic lights only at large intersections. Most of the streets are too narrow for even one-way traffic, but with a blithe disregard of the consequences, the majority are used as two-way streets. At most corners there are no policemen to guide traffic; the driver who blows his horn first is the one who has the right of way. As a result, most Cubans drive along at a merry clip, one hand constantly pounding the horn. Coming to a full stop from high speed is another startling trick of Havana's drivers; we honestly don't believe any of them were ever taught to slow down. Cars are



parked on even the narrowest streets, and the regulations are really fantastic. On even days of the month you must park on the left-hand side, on odd days, use the right. It means a ticket if you forget the date.

Incredible as it may seem, there are remarkably few accidents in the city.

**POLICE:** Havana has organized a special squad of English-speaking policemen for the benefit of tourists. Look for those in navy-blue uniforms wearing white armbands marked "Tourist Squad." They'll answer your questions and help you find your way around. Incidentally, all the policemen here are so polite and anxious to be of service that it is quite overwhelming.

**ADDRESS UNKNOWN:** If you want to get in touch with people and the telephone book is no help, try the Tourist Commission, which is armed with all city directories. As a last resort, the American Consulate at Obispo 61 can sometimes be of service. Don't take up their time, however, unless the matter is really important.

**IF YOU NEED A DOCTOR** or a dentist, or if you have an accident, call the Anglo-American Hospital at F 3134. They will refer you to practicing physicians or dentists who speak English. Call them also, should you break your glasses and need the services of an English-speaking optometrist.

**DRUGS:** If you have a prescription to be filled, Dr. Lorie's American Drug Store on the Prado,

where the entire staff speaks English, can take care of it. American drugs and proprietary medicines are sold here also at only slightly more than U.S.A. prices.

All drug stores (*farmacias*) do not remain open at night. Each store is open only one evening a week, the theory being that there's too much competition as things are, without asking for more trouble. Should you need your favorite indigestion remedy after six o'clock, your hotel or the newspapers can refer you to the nearest one that is open. Havana's telephone directory lists all drug stores and the nights they do business, but it took two years to compile this edition of the phone book; so its accuracy is not guaranteed.

NUMBER, PLEASE: Local telephone calls cost five cents from public booths. Hotels, as in America, charge ten. But you can make free calls from El Encanto and some of the other stores where service is unlimited. Unless you speak Spanish, however, do your phoning from hotels where English-speaking operators are at the switchboard. Wrestling with the Havana telephone system is an ordeal under any circumstances. If you don't speak the language, you might just as well give up in advance. One compensation, however, is that you may talk as long as you wish; there is no time limit on local calls.

*Personal preservation note:* Be careful when making or receiving calls to hold the receiver away from your ear. The Cuban temperament is not *en rapport* with mechanical devices. Plugging in at the

switchboard can be violent, with a terrific, deafening shock. Don't say we didn't warn you.

NEWSPAPERS: All Cuban newspapers cost five cents and are printed daily except Mondays. The *Havana Post* is the only English-language newspaper printed in Havana. New York and Miami papers can be bought at hotel newsstands. They will be several days old, of course. American magazines cost ten cents more than in the States.

TIME—and everyone seems to have plenty of it—is the same as United States Eastern Standard Time. When we change to Daylight Saving, Cuba does, too.

MOVIES: Most motion-picture houses show American sound films with Spanish titles. Listings of current attractions can be found in the English newspaper. Performances are continuous; shows start at about two, four, seven and nine P.M.

TIPPING: Take it for granted that everybody who does anything for you expects a tip. Tips for porters who carry luggage are fixed by law; the charge is twenty cents for each piece. Don't pay more. Please don't neglect the guides who show you through the Palace of Justice or any other public building; often they are students, working to make extra money. But don't, we urge, give alms to beggars, no matter how pathetic their looks. Begging is against the law and the Government does make sporadic attempts to clear beggars off the streets, but the best way to abolish this pest is by refusing all appeals firmly.

## RECOMMENDED HOTELS AND PENSIONS

All prices quoted apply to minimum-rate single rooms with bath during the winter season (December 15th to March 31st) on the European plan. Summer season rates (April 1st through December 14th) are lower. Special rates can usually be arranged for visits of a month or more, and a small discount is sometimes offered on weekly rates.

Hotels in Vedado are quiet. Hotels in the city are fairly close to Havana's hustle and bustle.

**AMBOS MUNDOS**—Obispo 25. In the old section of town. Small and friendly. Typical Cuban atmosphere. Roof-garden and terrace. Well-known restaurants. \$2.50

**HAVANA COUNTRY CLUB**—in Country Club Park about a half hour's drive from town. Guests must be introduced by a member or by an affiliated club. Fine golf course and sports facilities. Smart and fashionable. \$6.00

**FLORIDA**—Obispo 258. Centrally located next to the Floridita restaurant. Small. \$2.50

**INGLATERRA**—Prado 416, facing Parque Central. Medium size. In years past one of the city's best hotels. Charming Andalusian patio and enormous rooms. \$2.50

**LAFAYETTE**—O'Reilly and Aguiar. In the center of the business district. Small. \$2.50

**LINCOLN**—Galiano and Virtudes. In the shopping

neighborhood. Medium size. Modern facilities. Efficiently run. American management. \$3.00

NACIONAL—On Malecón at the edge of the city. Huge and lavish. Glorious view. Swimming pool, terraces, tennis courts, solarium, cocktail lounge, dancing patio. *Cabañas* for guests at private beach club. Ten minutes from the town, by car. Highly recommended. \$8.00

PARKVIEW—Morro and Colon. Pleasantly situated, across from the Presidential Palace. Medium size. Roof-garden. \$4.00

PLAZA—Neptuno and Zulueta. In the thick of the business section. Large. Formerly one of Havana's best-known hotels. Roof-garden. Bar. \$4.00

PRESIDENTE—G and Calzada, in Vedado. Close by the sea front. Medium size. Delightful gardens. Nice terrace and restaurant. Accessible to beach and country. Twenty minutes from the city. Highly recommended. \$5.00

SEVILLA-BILTMORE—Prado and Trocadero. Ideally central. Large. Famous as one of Havana's outstanding establishments. Picturesque patio. Good bar and restaurant. *Bohío* cocktail lounge, air-conditioned, in the arcade. Roof-garden open for Winter season. Center of much of the city's social life. Highly recommended. \$7.00

UNION—Cuba 405, at the corner of Amargura. In the heart of the colorful old section of Havana. Small. \$2.00

## PENSIONS

APARTMENT HOTEL—Eighth and Nineteenth, in Vedado. Accessible to beaches. Modern apartment-building type. Small. Garage facilities. \$3.00, American plan.

RIO CRISTAL—on the road to Rancho Boyeros, twenty miles from Havana. Small cottages for rent. Exceptional food and surroundings, \$7.00 a day, American plan.

SAVOY—F and Fifteenth, in Vedado. Accessible to beaches. Small. Formerly a private mansion. Nice garden. No telephones in rooms. All-year-round minimum rate of \$2.00

TROTCHA—Calzada and Second, in Vedado. Accessible to beaches. Large, but not all wings are occupied. Formerly a renowned family hotel. Magnificent tropical gardens. Bar. Quiet. No telephones in rooms. All-year-round minimum rate of \$2.50

VEDADO—Nineteenth and M, in Vedado. Small. Ocean view. No telephones in rooms. American plan only, \$5.00



## *Three Bags Full*

TURISTA is the Cuban epithet of derision for everything gauche or socially incorrect. "*Turista!*" uttered with a what-else-can-you-expect shrug of the shoulders, is the Cuban's answer to all *faux pas* committed by visitors. Nothing stamps one as a *turista* more irrevocably than the wrong clothes. There isn't a more forlorn spectacle than a boatload of tourists descending upon the Prado in January, decked out in the white linens, the Panama hats and all the Southern trappings foisted upon their unsuspecting persons by the resort departments of home-town shops. They are considerably baffled (that's understatement!) to find the Cubans conservatively going about in dark street clothes, business suits, suede shoes, felt hats—just the clothes the tourists left behind. Unpredictable as their own weather, Cubans are creatures of habit about dress.

No matter how the mercury soars, from December through March (Cuban winter), dark clothes are worn. True, these are of tropical worsted or gabardine for men, and thin silk or rayon crepe for women; nevertheless, designs and colors are the same as fashions worn on Fifth Avenue during similar months.

Obviously, all of us choose the vacation clothes that look best and do most for us. Be sure, however, to figure out a wardrobe that is not at complete odds with the Cuban scene. Besides looking better, there's a perfectly practical reason for blending with your Havana environment. Looking as though you belonged helps you to escape the plague of street peddlers and beggars that descends upon *turistas*. It is really a form of protective coloring.

*Warning to the let-yourself-go school of thought:* Don't even dare to think of wearing slacks, short socks or backless sun dresses on the city streets, if you're a woman; cork helmets or two-piece play ensembles, if you're a man. You'd never dream of walking down Broadway in such a get-up, would you? Remember that Havana is as large a city as San Francisco, and certainly as cosmopolitan. To dress as you would for the streets at home is your safest bet.

The Cuban summer begins April 1st, and overnight everyone changes into light colors. Now the men appear in magnificent hundred-twist linen drill suits, laundered and starched to the high perfection of fine damask tablecloths, while the wom-



en wear the same kind of warm-weather frocks seen on our city streets during the dog days. Again, your cue is to dress as you would for summer at home.

It is in the beach- and play-clothes department, however, that you really can go to town! As long as you wear them at the right time and place—for active sports, on beaches, at private clubs—your play clothes can rival Joseph's coat. Women can play siren-on-the-sands and men disport themselves in the vivid trunks they have been too shy to wear before. Cubans adore novelties for sports, and a pair of rocking-chair heel sandals, fresh from Bonwit's, made one of us the sensation at the yacht club!

You're not going to wear evening clothes as much as you think you are; so go light on quantity. Cubans usually dress formally for public appearances only on Thursday and Saturday nights, or when something special is scheduled. Otherwise, evening kit is confined to private parties and club galas except during the Christmas holiday season. Then everything is particularly festive, and to dress is the rule rather than the exception.

FOR MEN ONLY: Many travelers fondly imagine casual clothes are all Havana requires. Nothing could be further from the truth. Native men are as clothes-conscious as their women, and the well-to-do take great pains with their wardrobes, achieving the results associated with elegant Continentals. Men of means naturally order their suits tailored to

measure in the strictest European tradition, and their understanding of fabrics and needling gives them an almost feminine interest in dressing. Besides, everywhere one turns there are the military men; the army, the navy, the police, even the private night-watchmen, are in stunning uniforms, colorful as any from a musical comedy, fitting with whittled-down perfection. Really, they steal the show.

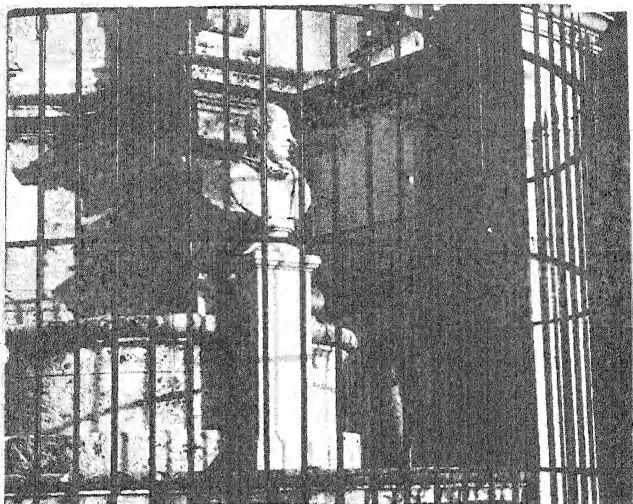
There is great adoration of American clothes, primarily because our mass-manufacturing methods supply such good-looking, well-fitting suits, ready-made. Also, our easy cut and fit do more to flatter the average male physique.

Cubans in lower-income brackets often indulge in extreme tailoring, trousers that fit too tightly, sporty-plus jackets, elaborate shoes with pointed toes. Your gentleman of income, however, is conservatively correct and wears boots in the best British manner, glossy and deeply polished. Almost all men have their shoes made to order, since prices for custom-made shoes are much lower than ours. Twelve dollars buys the finest leather and best workmanship.

Color is exciting to Cubans of every class. If they err in taste, it will be by wearing florid shades or combining too many. The Parisian love of detail and intricate fabrics is also quite Cuban, and the most common fashion blind-spot is in the failure to ensemble properly. Even the well-dressed Cuban sometimes gets himself together like a swing-band,



CUBAN TOURIST COMMISSION  
THE PRADO, AND THE SEVILLA-BILTMORE HOTEL

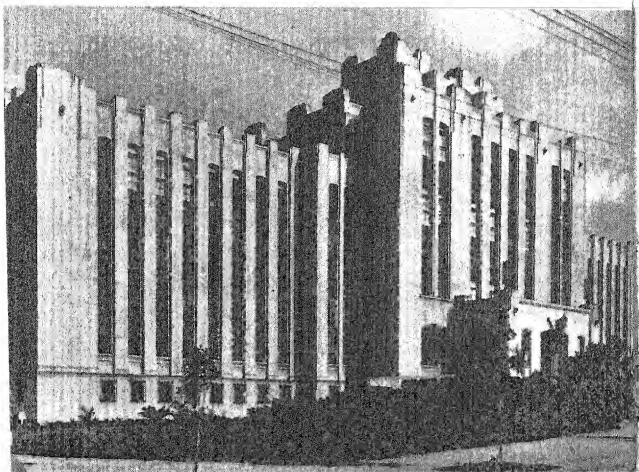


ROBERTO MACHADO

SHRINE COMMEMORATING THE FIRST MASS HELD IN  
THE WESTERN WORLD

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL IN HAVANA

CUBAN TOURIST COMMISSION



each item of his apparel being chosen for its ability to hit a note and carry it. Evidently to his eye the individual merit of a shirt or tie is more important than its effect on the whole.

THE SUITS AN AMERICAN TAKES TO CUBA should be similar to those he'd wear at home, though lighter in weight. From December through March, tropical worsteds, gabardines, flannel slacks and tweed jackets in dark colors are best, accompanied by a light top-coat, of course, and a felt hat.

You will definitely need a hat for Havana; so don't be rash enough to run the risk of sun-stroke, notwithstanding shaded sidewalks. Incidentally, here, for once, are men whose hats are above reproach. Cubans not only have the knack of picking a good-looking felt, but one that actually flatters the face under it. And the well-dressed Cuban has many more hats than his American brother.

Be sure you have plenty of shirts, socks, underclothes and handkerchiefs; you will want to change more often than you do at home. If you have a yen for color, by all means, let yourself go in your ties. "The brighter, the better" is the Cuban's motto, and, currently, those big patterns are considered quite the thing.

*Reiteration:* We can't sufficiently deplore the bad taste shown by so many Americans who loom across hotel lobbies in messy, unpressed lounge suits, notable for un-chic. If you insist on disregarding our suggestion about sticking to fairly citified clothes in the large metropolis of Havana, we urge

that your play clothes be unobtrusive in color and classic in style. For Heaven's sake, find a fabric blessed with enough stamina to hold its shape and not go baggy. When you wear such an outfit into a restaurant or hotel, slip on a jacket.

For evening, when dressing is in order, black dinner suits of tropical worsted are fine. Light jackets are a mistake during the winter season. Remember, however, that Cubans don't wear evening clothes in public as much as we do, and there isn't a night club doing business in Havana that will refuse admission to a cash customer because he's in street clothes.

When the summer season starts, everyone goes into whites, topped off with Panama hats, and March 31st sees Cuban business men carefully carrying home important-looking paper packages—their new straw hats. From April on, bring with you the best-looking linen and light-colored tropical-weight suits you can find. As we mentioned before, the Cubans are supreme in whites. They often have as many as six or seven white linen suits, change them after one wearing and look immaculate and fresh. For evening you can sport the same gray, white or beige jackets they affect, worn with cummerbunds.

When you pack your bathing suit, remember that *La Playa* (public beach) and some of the more conservative clubs require that men wear tops. And take along a sweat-shirt or robe as protection from too much sun.

WOMEN'S AND MISSES' DEPARTMENT: In Havana, the fashion tendency is all toward formality. No Cuban woman just puts on a dress and goes out. When she appears one is conscious of a toilette that makes an effect. She is preceded and followed by an almost tangible air of elegance, distinctly European in feeling. If she is wealthy, her costumes are either imported, with an abundance of intricate detail and fine hand-work, or custom-made. Because the *criolla* figure, like the Frenchwoman's, is short-limbed, her clothes must be fitted with extreme care, and to-order fashions rather than ready-made solve the problem of smarter Cubans.

If you find while you're in Havana that you want the fun of a new dress, provided time allows, you can have a knockout, made-to-order costume at much below U.S. cost. First, find your fabric. All the big stores have excellent yard-goods departments specializing in prints. If you want to snoop for bargains, there are shops along Muralla or Neptuno Streets that sell remnants of dress lengths. Now, what you need is that little dream of a dressmaker. Ask the salesgirl who sold you the silk or the cigar-counter girl or the manicurist. Somewhere along the line, you'll have success. Male or female, the dressmaker will carry out your ideas, copy a magazine sketch or design something especially for you, all very expertly and without benefit of pattern. You'll pay in the neighborhood of \$10.00 or less, all told, for a typical couturier affair, cut to measure and worked out in canvas, first. Your frock will be

completely individual in style, finished like an American outfit of fairly fabulous price. The well-known dressmakers along the Prado, however, price their creations much higher; don't expect to find bargains in any couturier-like establishment.

Part of the fun you'll get from your stay is the fuss that will be made over the details of your own appearance. You can expect to be subjected to a minute scrutiny every step of the way, from the girl behind the magazine counter who asks you what you do for your skin, to your Cuban escort who goes mad with joy because (thanks to God and Saks Fifth Avenue) your shoes show "the little fingers of the feet." Everyone loves American styles, and American residents may even attempt to buy your new bathing-suit right off your back! Try to take along at least one spanking-new fashion idea that has just appeared in the States. It will prove to be a great attention-getter and conversational ice-breaker. Just a silly gadget like a street-lamp lapel pin can start you on the royal road to success.

Be resigned in advance to the fact that the climate takes out your wave and simplify your hair-do before you leave home. (Suggestion from the Voice of Experience: Brilliantine is a life-saver in keeping unruly hair under control in this humid atmosphere.) Don't be timid about using the beauty shops in Havana. The operators usually are extremely competent and the prices, except at smart hotels, are lower than ours. We liked the way they fixed us



up at El Encanto, and The America, on Calle San Miguel, does excellent work inexpensively.

Being "done" at a Cuban beauty shop is an interesting experience. The French technique, slow and painstaking, is employed, and your operator will fuss with your hair for ages. Dissuade her from designing a new coiffure, or from any other interesting experiments, else you may wind up like the old lady in the nursery rhyme, "Lord-a-mercy, can this be I?" . . . One of us misguidedly permitted the manicurist at the beach club to "put a little color" at the nails. What was it? A red rim around the cuticle!

The beautiful hair of Cuban women will impress you. They lacquer its natural luxuriance with brilliantine, devoting endless hours to keeping it in sleek perfection or designing new effects. The page-boy bob is widely worn but with personalized top-rolls, coxcombs and fringes that make each head appear completely individual. The younger girls have gone overboard in favor of snoods because, besides being becoming, they keep hair-do's so nicely under control.

There is a different approach to the cosmetic question for you here, too. Come prepared to gild the lily. Havana's languorous beauties put you on your mettle. You will indulge in heavier eye-shadow, rouge, lipstick and mascara, heightening the *femme fatale* effect and achieving a generally more exotic appearance than you do in the States. It is really a psychological necessity, an effort not

to seem pallid by comparison with the tropical sun and scenery. You will use more perfume, too, and probably adopt the native custom of dousing yourself liberally with toilet water for coolness as well as glamour.

The water is harder in Havana; so a water-softener will make your baths more enjoyable. Remember that there is a Five-and-Ten easily accessible where you can stock up on invisibles or curlers or any other gadgets that were overlooked.

## HEAD-TO-TOE WARDROBE GUIDE

**SHOES:** Include Old Faithful, a comfortable pair of low-heeled walking shoes. The rest can be fairly dressy, geared to other accessories, of course. Lightweight sandals are a smart choice, in fabric or straw. Keep away from patent leather or alligator; they're hot. Incidentally, don't be alarmed if your ankles and legs get puffy. It's dat ole debil, tropical climate. The proper remedy is cold epsom-salt foot baths. When you rest, keeping your feet up higher than your head will help too.

**HOSIERY:** Take plenty because silk hose are quite high-priced in Havana and not comparable in quality to ours, at the prices charged. Nylons are ideal. Besides being magically long-lived, they don't insulate at all. After a long, hot day, there's none of that clammy stickiness you find with hose of natural silk. In the summer, buy those thin toe and heel coverers of flesh lisle at Woolworth's, and forget

about stockings completely if your legs are shapely, tanned and well-groomed.

LINGERIE: Take enough for many changes and be sure it is lightweight and porous. Laundry costs a pretty penny at hotels; so if you're smart you'll indulge in glove silks that can be rinsed out in a whisk and need no ironing. Foundations are a bit ornery in this climate. We recommend panty-girdles of mesh elastic and net or lace bras.

CLOTHES: Stick to a simple, one-color-scheme, basic wardrobe. From November through March, deep tones are smartest; lighter neutrals and bright shades come into their own for April to October. Citified prints with small decisive patterns on dark grounds are excellent. Dresses of silk jersey are a joy. They pack superbly, never wrinkle, always give that fresh-from-a-bandbox effect sometimes hard to achieve when you're living out of suitcases. Ring in as many changes of accessories as possible with special attention to jewelry and gadgets. A dark dress with a few sets of lingerie-type collars and cuffs is always good.

For a week's stay you will need a minimum of two street dresses, three afternoon frocks and one evening gown. If you're going to the beach often or expect to spend time in the country, include a casual spectator costume. Your coat can be spring weight, preferably a monotone wool that will harmonize with everything. For evening, take a short wrap, one that can double for daytime wear too. If your visit is to extend past a week, bring as many

changes as possible. You'll be seeing the same people, visiting the same spots; so clothes variety will be the spice of your life.

If you're staying at Rio Cristal, the Country Club, or planning an expedition to Varadero, gay beach pajamas or slack suits are a necessity. Cuban women rarely wear shorts, except for active sports, perhaps because they're not too flattering. As a matter of fact, at Varadero, you don't need dresses at all. From morning to night, natives wear the brightest pajama ensembles they can find and load on multiple strands of the tiny shell necklaces peddled all over the place. The result is colorful as well as comfortable.

Your bathing suit should be as startling as your figure can stand, and unless you have tough skin, be sure to take a broad-brimmed beach hat to protect you from the sun and glare.

**HATS:** As many as possible is the idea, and they should be gay and eye-catching. Veils are highly appreciated. Incidentally, you'll notice that some of the older Cuban ladies go hatless with veils tied over their faces and hair—a lingering of the *mantilla* epoch. *Mantillas* are still in evidence at formal occasions. In the summer, Cuban women don't wear hats at all. Unless you want a big brim for shade, you'll find hats a nuisance. Bring instead scarves and kerchiefs that can be twisted into turbans. They're effective and far more comfortable.

**FURS:** Paradoxically enough, there's a big furore over furs in Havana. The great silver-fox plague raging up North has now spread down to the

tropics. Cuban women of means adore mink, ermine, sable, fox, all the precious furs, and wear them lavishly. As a matter of fact, Havana seems to be a Mecca for phony furs among the poorer women. To own a fur-piece is everyone's ambition, even if it's only a skimpy one-skin scarf of dubious ancestry. So if you're on tour during the winter season, bring your little furs: scarves, stoles, capes or jackets of lightweight pelts.

ACCESSORIES: Make your main effect with lots of frivolous incidentals: jewelry, scarves, belts, flowers and gadgets. Forget about gloves completely; you'll never use them. Have at least one capacious carry-all pocketbook, the kind with a zipper pocket for travelers' checks and other state papers. Your dress bag should be as smart and sumptuous-looking as possible. Remember, it's going to be lying on tables in full view of critical Cuban eyes. And you'll need an evening bag, too.

Havana is one place where you can indulge your love for the ornamental. Prettiness and femininity are favored here, and anything that helps achieve this effect is all to the good. Fans are still used with much coquetry. Lorgnettes are everyday equipment, for no Cuban woman would dream of hiding her beautiful eyes behind spectacles, no matter how badly she needed them. In the summer you can even carry a lacy parasol without exciting anything but admiring comment.

*Last warning:* Pristine white accessories out of season are the unfailing identification mark of lady *turistas!*



## *So Near and Yet So Foreign*

THE ENTRANCE to Havana's harbor is always dazzling. By day there are the pinkish-white plaster of the crowded buildings, the weather-beaten reds and golds of the tiled roofs, the silvered-gray of the ancient ramparts, all sparkling in the brilliance of a tropic sun. By night, the necklace of lights along Malecón, that fabulously beautiful sea-front drive, the silhouettes of royal palms against the sky and the bright star-crowded heavens, give the harbor the unreal quality of a painted backdrop.

Thanks to picture postcards, travel sections and tourist snapshots, however, all of this is a fairly familiar sight, impressive but not shattering. You become aware that you are in a completely foreign, exotic city only on leaving the Customs shed and stepping out into the streets. For the first time, Havana's unique atmosphere engulfs you. You see tortuous cobbled streets, balconied buildings with

elaborate iron grilles and stupendous carved mahogany doors, sidewalks shaded from the sun in pillared arcade effect. You notice the cool plant-filled patios, the lush tropical foliage in little parks scattered everywhere throughout the city, the vivid, unmixed, glorious colors. It's the color that gives Havana its perpetually *fiesta*-like appearance. There's color in everything; it gleams in the buildings and the rooftops, glows in the flowers and foliage, is gay in the tiled walls, and bright in the complexions and clothes of the women. It is pure concentrated color that almost blinds our Northern eyes, so accustomed to cities done in subdued half-tones.

The strangeness of Havana isn't just seen, but heard, too. The singsong cries of the street peddlers, the peremptory chorus of auto horns clamoring for right-of-way, the musically murmured comments of bystanders as you pass—all these merge into a voice that speaks a foreign language. You can even smell the difference in the savory odors of the cooking, the crisp aroma of roasting coffee, the perfumed aura surrounding Cuban women and the mellow whiff of Havana tobacco that teases your senses whenever a cigar is lit.

It seems incredible that this alien way of life has continued placidly so near our bustling American shores and yet so unchanged by them. Havana is two hours by plane from the U.S.A.; but it is so remote from the American pattern of living, it could well be on another planet.

The city is steeped in history. Each wall, each building, has its story. And Havana's history is not a textbook affair, either, but a part of the pattern of daily living. Even should you wish to, you can't escape it. Every guide, taxi driver, policeman and street urchin wants tourists to appreciate and be properly awed by the city landmarks. See the historic buildings, by all means, if not for their associations, at least for the beauty of their architecture. At the end of this chapter, some routine "points of interest" are listed. But don't for a second lose sight of this: Havana has much more than past glory with which to hold your interest. Merely walking through the streets is a fascinating sightseeing trip. Most of the stores have open fronts; so do the restaurants and bars. You pass a barber-shop and watch a *caballero* getting his side-burns trimmed for the night's dance; if you stare fascinatedly as he is sprayed with cologne, he may half rise from his chair to bow politely. An impromptu cockfight may be taking place on the tiled floor of the corner *cantina*, with all the patrons loudly discussing the relative merits of the birds. Street vendors pass unendingly, some precariously balancing glass cases of gaudy pastries on their heads, or loaded down with forests of wooden coat-hangers, others literally walking billboards—these are the lottery-ticket peddlers who wear enormous placards advertising the numbers they sell. *Guaguas* (the little buses) tear past at a maniacal rate of speed; trolleys clang along busily. In front of the clubs sit the gentlemen in



rocking-chair brigades, hissing now and then to attract a passing friend. Over the balconies of the houses hang soft-eyed mulatto women watching the life in the streets below. And, of course, no matter where you go or how you look, you are followed by a chorus of "*ay, qué linda!*" (How beautiful!), "*Sabrosísima!*" (Delicious!) and "*qué carita más preciosa!*" (What an exquisite face!). Don't lose your equanimity; the comments are inevitably admiring, outrageously flattering and certainly one of the most charming customs of the country.

We majored in Havana history our first few days in the city. After that we abandoned orthodox sight-seeing in favor of activities which are casual for the Cubans but exciting for strangers. Travel books don't concentrate enough on such things. They'll tell in detail how De Soto's wife wept her eyes out at La Fuerza, vainly awaiting her husband's return, but will not offer a word about the lively old city markets. You'll get reams on Columbus' remarks to his diary when he first sighted Cuba, but no mention of the little sampans that ferry you over to Casablanca. You will be snowed under with statistics on the construction and cost of Morro Castle, but not so much as a whisper about the fantastic magnificence of the modern police stations. The suggestions that follow take you off the beaten path to show you Havana as it is today, and not as a museum of past grandeur.

First on the list are the city markets. Our favorite

is old *Mercado Colon*, just across the street from the Sevilla-Biltmore, sprawled over a full city block, bounded by Calles Zulueta, Trocadero, Monserrate and Animas.

It is a behemoth of a building that was condemned at least twenty years ago when the plaster started falling in chunks, just as it does today. Within is a huge patio given over to truck-garden-produce stalls, surrounded by a shell-like colonnaded structure. You look up dizzily to the great domed roof and wonder who could possibly inhabit the corner towers and upper living quarters, reached by spindly spiral stairways. The live-fowl market is here, with cage after cage of guinea hens, turkeys and chickens. There are heaps and heaps of smallish Cuban eggs, and, inevitably, a vase of roses at every chicken man's booth. Inside is *Los Industriales*, the market café where sometimes there will be a workman leisurely recaning a chair, or perhaps a customer nonchalantly shaving his chin right at a table. The sooty old kitchen is no more, alas, but it is still possible to get sandwiches and drinks there, twenty-four hours a day.

Around the outside of the market the sidewalk stalls are ranged. There one can buy everything from casseroles to red cotton panties at a dime a pair. The food stands sell housewives their canned goods, breads, cheeses, pastries, and serve as lunch-counters, too. We sampled their *café solo* in two-cent cups—it's good! There is a welter of clothing: slippers of leather, calico frocks, flamboyant

shirts, tinny jewelry, perfumery. You wade through piles of household utensils, baskets, old iron and china, stoves, pots and pans. Cigars, sheet music, second-hand books and old records are on sale. One could set up housekeeping from here. Everything for the inner and outer man is right on hand!

Two other markets are worth seeing. One is the *Mercado Unico*, the food market, on Calle Monte, largest of all. You will never realize how many things there are to eat in Cuba until you struggle through the sacks of beans and rice, past stalls crowded with tins of fish, sausage in lard, pickles, conserves and cheeses. Dried codfish hangs everywhere, and jerk beef, too. We asked about some great slabs of meat stacked high and learned that it was dried shark. A block or so away is the iron pushcart market, a line-up of peddlers' carts alongside the curb, loaded down with pipes and wrenches, old brass and bronze. Every kind of junk metal has its day here, and trading goes on briskly.

You will like the Lottery Market, too, formerly known as *Plaza del Vapor*, on Calle Galiano. It is a bewildering arcade of heavily placarded stalls where lottery tickets are hawked. Numbers, numbers everywhere!

Every morning from six until noon, farmers and peddlers set up an open-air market in the tiny square at the junction of Cuba and Acosta Streets. Ramble past to see the garden produce piled high on pushbarrows, gleaming in the sun like a Campbell's Soup advertisement, the fat chickens and

guinea hens trussed up for sale, the mounds of eggs. There is a medieval air to this little plaza, bounded by the fortress-like walls of Spiritu Sanctu Church, when it is crowded with countrymen lustily hawking their wares and business-like housewives shrewdly bargaining to save a penny. A couple of other *mercados libres* (free markets, so called because the tradesmen don't have to pay for stall space) worth seeing are in Vedado. These operate Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings at Parque Menocal, and at Paseo and Twenty-third.

You mustn't miss the clubs, of course. Even more than the Spaniards, every Cuban is a clubman at heart; so Havana is probably the greatest club city in the world. More than half the population belong to at least one, sometimes two or three. There are clubs for all, from the great regional societies (originally founded in colonial times by natives from the different provinces of Spain so they could fraternize with fellow-countrymen) to super-Hollywood affairs like the Havana Yacht Club or the Jaimanitas Biltmore. Some are trade associations. Even the clerks have their own organization, *Centro de Dependientes*, housed in an ornate million-dollar building on the Prado.

Take time to see at least one. The *Centro Gallego*, on the north side of Parque Central, or the *Centro Asturiano*, on the south, for instance, are almost incredible when you realize that members are not what might be called representatives of the

privileged classes. Each club has about forty thousand members paying monthly dues of two dollars, which entitles them to free medical and dental care, legal advice, education, hospitalization and even free burials! The buildings are baroque palaces, lavish with marble, loaded with frescoes, murals, statuary and gilt in the best Paris-Opera-House tradition. Their broad marble staircases wind up to ball-rooms vaguely reminiscent of the Grand Central Station; above these are mahogany-paneled libraries, schoolrooms, gymnasiums and billiard rooms. Cubans really live in their clubs. Here the men come to meet friends, play nightly games of dominoes or billiards, have a drink and discuss the news of the day. Members send their children to *centro* schools because, until a few years ago, the public-school system in Cuba was conducted on a rather catch-as-catch-can basis. Now, even though supervised by the Government's Department of Education, they are still considered superior to most of the public schools. Curricula cover all subjects, even handicrafts, painting and sculpture; free scholarships provide tuition abroad for more talented pupils.

In the suburbs each association maintains efficient modern hospitals (called *quintas*) and old-folks' homes. The *Hijas de Galicia* even has a beach club for women. Please note that through these associations, Cubans received the benefits of socialized medicine long years before the U.S.A. became aware of its importance.

The *Casino Español* on the Prado is the Castilian club. Dues run higher, \$7.00 a month, with membership and quarters correspondingly smaller, for this is the upper-income-bracket group. Here you will find fine old mahogany furniture, paintings of all the Marquesses of Pinar del Rio—the Club's patron family—and trophy rooms filled with shining Toledo steel. There are framed letters signed in the flourishing handwriting of the late King Alfonso of Spain and the inevitable libraries, game rooms, bars and ball-rooms. It was startling to see a large room given over to poker tables and equipment. What a brash American touch in the midst of all this feudal splendor!

At the other end of the pole from the regional societies are the country and yacht clubs. If you have friends in Havana who belong, or if you are a member of a club in the States that has affiliations, use all your influence, pull every string and wangle a guest card. Conducted on a far more extravagant scale than similar clubs at home, they have magnificent beach facilities. It is a privilege as well as an entertaining experience to visit them.

The Havana Yacht Club in Marianao, founded in 1886, was the first yacht club around Havana and is the citadel of upper-crust society. You will enjoy the bathing, sailing or tennis. Look at the original etchings of early Havana hanging in the club rooms—one of the finest collections in the country.

If golf is your hobby, the Country Club of

Havana, Jaimanitas or Rovers Clubs have remarkably good courses. Hotels will make arrangements for guests to play on payment of greens fees.

The Havana Country Club, incidentally, is much more than just a club, for actually it was one of the most important factors in changing the social-behavior pattern of the Cubans. Here for the first time, thirty years ago, Cubans got a glimpse of the easy, outdoor life Americans have always taken for granted. Prior to its founding, *caballeros*, for lack of anything better to do, were wont to spend the Saturday to Monday week-end drinking, gambling and gossiping in bars, while their wives waited patiently at home. After Americans built the course, Cubans began playing golf. Now they're such ardent athletes that today every club provides, quite as a matter of course, squash, tennis, handball, basketball and even bowling for its members. Cubans, watching the impersonal, between-sexes camaraderie of the Americans, were encouraged to allow their daughters a similar measure of freedom. In this way, the Country Club can really be credited for the relaxation of the hitherto rigid *dueña* system. Today, daughters of Cuba's first families lounge or play on the clubhouse grounds with the same freedom our own girls enjoy, and, to a certain extent, this attitude has penetrated to other social levels.

Vedado Tennis Club, where the Davis Cup matches are played, is another movie-set spectacle. Acres and acres, given over to sports of every kind,

including a baseball diamond, cinder track and basketball field, surround the clubhouse, and the open-air swimming pool is about the largest we have ever seen.

*Casino Deportivo de la Habana* outdoes all its competitors in the grandeur of its appointments. (The story goes that it was built by an outraged gentleman who couldn't get into any of the others!) Then there's Miramar Yacht Club in Reparto Miramar, with a relaxing and informal atmosphere. We liked occasional dips there, for the bus driver (Bus 32) would always swerve obligingly a whole block from his course to let us off right in front of the door.

It is pretty hard for strangers to believe that an extensive cultural life flourishes in Cuba. Liquor and license are what most tourists expect; they come in search of the sensational. Havana, always anxious to please, accommodatingly shows her seamy side. The other is at least equally interesting, we think. Music, painting and sculpture flourish, organized through clubs whose memberships increase steadily. As a matter of fact, Havana has a club to take care of every spiritual or mental need. Bred in the European tradition, your true *Criollo* prides himself on being a dilettante in the arts. Hard-headed businessmen paint (more than passably well, too), write, translate plays or compose music quite as a matter of course. And if there is no club where they can meet others with similar interests, they will found one!



The *Pro-Musica Sinfonica* Society's orchestra of ninety musicians gives fortnightly concerts where internationally known artists (usually secured through the backing of the more important patrons) perform, and the conservative social set, rarely seen in night clubs or cabarets, turns out *en masse*. Attendance for residents is by membership only, but tourists are allowed the privilege of buying single tickets.

The *Pro-Arte Musical* is a women's organization which, in addition to sponsoring monthly concerts and an operatic season, conducts music courses and maintains a ballet school with truly professional standards. *Pro-Arte* has been so successful that they have built their own theater, the Auditorium, in Vedado, where most of the important musical events take place.

Still another feminine group, the Lyceum, is responsible for most of the artistic life of the city. They sponsor daily lectures, art shows, run a night school for the poor and maintain the public library of Vedado in their new \$40,000 clubhouse. There is nothing amateurish about their work, either. The Pan-American Arts and Crafts Exhibit we attended, for example, could have been pointed to with pride by any professional gallery in the States. It interested us, too, to see the substantial turnout of young women at six-o'clock concerts, an hour most American girls devote to cocktailing or preparing for evening dates. We could go on listing the clubs interminably. The *Sociedad Guitarrista* upholds the

tradition that all Latin damsels should play the guitar with spirit and sing sweetly. The *Club Femenino*, having procured the vote for Cuban women, has now relaxed and devotes itself to literature. There's even a cultural club that awards paintings and sculpture by well-known artists as prizes for its monthly lottery, so that members may enjoy good art at lower-than-market prices.

The society pages of the English-language newspaper print advance notices of all cultural events, and we urge you to attend at least one for a phase of Cuban life most tourists never see.

Cuba is one place where Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan couldn't sell the idea that "the policeman's lot is not a happy one." Here the policeman is king; he lives and works in surroundings regal enough for majesty. The best example is the main police station of the first precinct, in the old section of the city, facing the Malecón, on Calles Cuba and Chacón. It is a fortress-like building of primrose-colored stone, complete with moat and drawbridge effect. The interior is equally imposing; Cuban mahogany, cedar and marble are used with a lavish hand. There are large airy dormitories and infirmaries for the men, as well as free barbers, tailors and boot-blacks. The top floor is devoted to the clubroom (yes, policemen have to have their own clubs, too), and you will be struck by the splendor of the hand-carved mahogany tables and chairs, the beamed ceilings, the broad marble terraces.

The view from the roof with its little lookout towers is the kind of panorama of harbor, ships and city that makes every tourist automatically reach for his camera. Old Morro across the bay provides an interesting contrast to this modern fortress.

Every detail of the building and furnishings was constructed by members of the force, even to the exquisitely carved grandfather's clock in the main hall. Whenever Havana wants a new police station the department recruits enough masons, carpenters and cabinet-makers to complete the project!

There is no lack of applicants either, since the salary is \$90.00 a month with food, medical care, lodging, all 'found.' The uniforms alone are an inducement; they are handsome enough to flatter any man.

We found an interesting footnote to all this opulence in the cell for prisoners, a tiny cage on the main floor that cannot hold more than a dozen men. If it were not for this cage, you could almost mistake the station for a new luxury hotel.

All precinct houses duplicate the pattern of this one. You will recognize their characteristic medieval-castle effect in gray stucco, trimmed with white, as you drive through the city. The officer of the day at any of the stations will gladly detail an escort to guide you around, since the entire force is inordinately proud of the way the Government provides for their well-being.

Most important day of the week for Cubans is Wednesday, when the lottery drawings are held from two to four in the afternoon. They are conducted in an impressive old gray pile of a building at 158 Amargura, and the goings-on are open to the public. Many businessmen desert their desks to attend. Business can wait, for—*quien sabe*—Fate might pick one for the *premio gordo*, the fat prize! Since the lottery is government-controlled, plenty of uniforms are in evidence and the procedure entails a good deal of formality. Before the hushed, tense crowd, orphans from Benificencia pick the numbers after the brass cages have been twirled. As a number ball rolls out of one cage, a ball showing its cash value rolls out of the other. Both are strung on wires, like an abacus, and when the drawing is completed, the wires are locked to forestall any chance of chicanery. Then the numbers are left posted for inspection. The drawing is climaxed by the *premio gordo*, which is at least \$30,000.00. Lottery tickets are sold by the piece. Thus as many as a hundred people can share in each award. Naturally, the more pieces of a ticket you own, the more of the prize you get.

The lottery drawing was one of the typically Cuban events we almost missed. Every Wednesday for weeks we had a standing date with our captain to see the drawings. Every Wednesday, as we finished our unfailingly late luncheon, he would consult his watch and clap his forehead reproachfully. Too late! We had missed it again. It got to be Number

One on our interminable list of reasons-to-return-to-Havana, and that we finally made it was real evidence of our determination in the face of Cuba's happy-go-lucky, never-do-today-what-you-can-put-off-until-tomorrow attitude.

Along the Malecón at Avenida Cespedes is Havana's lovely open-air amphitheater, framed in classic Ionic columns and set in a charming park overlooking the harbor. The Cuban Philharmonic performs here as well as the Police Band and Municipal Orchestra. There are dance recitals and even literary evenings, when poetry, ream on ream, is elocuted fervently in the best Shakespearean tradition. All of this culture is free for the taking any Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday or Sunday evening, from eight to ten-thirty.

Stop off to see one of the largest outdoor playgrounds in captivity at Calles G and H, the end of Malecón, almost where Vedado begins—concrete evidence of the Cuban Government's active program of youth regeneration. The playground covers nine or ten square blocks in area and is equipped for every conceivable sport except ice-skating. There are a baseball diamond, basketball and handball courts, even a cinder track. For growing-up athletes, swings, see-saws and sand-piles are provided. The most breathtaking feature is a superlative swimming pool with a towering diving platform. Dressing rooms are subterranean, with portholes that

afford an interesting underwater view of the pool. From this point of vantage we got some unusual submarine shots of swimmers.

Going on to Vedado, don't miss seeing the funny old-fashioned sea baths, the *baños*. There are three, *El Progreso*, at First and Calle Baños, *Las Playas*, at First and Calle D, and *Carneado*, at First and Paseo. The shore-line in this section is rocky, a shelf of coral. The baths are in a big ramshackle building, open to the sea, with dressing rooms in tiers. The roof of its great shed structure extends out over the water, and steps lead down, hollowed out of solid rock. Once in, you're on your own. If you are not an Eleanor Holm, there are thick, roof-suspended ropes to which you can cling. The sea sweeps in freely from outside, fish and all. Three sides of the pool are rock; on the sea side, heavy iron bars run between clumps of rock to form the outer boundary. This keeps the large fish out and the bathers in, for swimmers are prohibited from venturing outside, where it is open, shark-infested ocean. Besides the big public pool, there are small separate ones, hollowed out of rock in the same fashion. Quite nice, too, because being private, you can go in *au naturel*. Monthly club tickets are sold for the *baños*, and many residents who can't get out to the beach enjoy the sea this way.

In Vedado, also, is the Trotcha Hotel, built in French Colonial style and quite old. Stop by for

cocktails. You will like the profusely overgrown gardens with thickly foliated paths. Once the cry of "Camera!" echoed here, when American film companies used the gardens as locale. But all that is past. The atmosphere now is somnolent and still. The old crocodile that occupied a pen at the back of the gardens is gone long since to his ancestors on the Isis. Yet, though it seems a part of yesterday, the bar at least keeps step with today. Their Trotcha Special is a drink to remember, the formula still a secret of the house.

At the end of Vedado, on Calzada, where a bridge crosses the Almendares River to Reparto Miramar, there is an enormous pile of green stucco called the Riverside Club. Built as a private home by Carlos Miguel de Cespedes, head of the Department of Public Works during Machado's reign, it is an amusing example of the grandiose extremes to which Cubans were carried during the Dance of the Millions. The house itself is unusual only because of size, but the grounds, sloping to a private landing pier at the river's edge, dominated by a mosaic shrine, brought from India at a cost of \$200,000.00 and assembled bit by bit, are something to see. An intricate moat and drawbridge arrangement leads to caves, hollowed out of the natural rock formation, where there used to be a private zoo. Now plaster images of saints on improvised altars within each cave replace the hyenas and tigers! Grottoes, summer houses and trees sculp-

tured into bizarre shapes are scattered with abandon. The result is real Alice-in-Wonderland. Riverside has undergone many vicissitudes. Sometimes it is open, sometimes it is boarded up, but we hope you will at least have a chance to inspect the gardens and marvel at the things man can do to Nature when he sets his mind to it.

In your caravanning by auto, don't miss the *Bosque*, Havana's man-made woods, a gorge-like park that winds along the valley of the Almendares River, about fifteen minutes out of town. Formerly this was tangled and jungly; now roads have been carved out of the chalk cliffs, winding up and up to sheer drops from which you look down on the twisting stream. What goes up must come down. And the *Bosque* roads come down with a vengeance, like a scenic railway. Our first taste of *El Bosque* was with a Cuban gentleman who fancied himself in the role of speed-demon and had a penchant for skimming round hairpin curves or spinning down inclines at top speed. His pet trick was to zoom up a hill in high, then laugh uproariously when the car started sliding backwards, while we turned an interesting shade of pea-green. That we can still think kindly of *El Bosque* is a genuine tribute to its beauty.

Farther out is the Country Club Park section that surrounds the Havana Country Club. It is worth seeing, since the sumptuous homes and es-



tates of Cuba's millionaires put even Beverly Hills in the shade. At the entrance to the park is a lake shaped like the island of Cuba, illuminated at night, but shadowy enough to be a favored Lovers' Lane.

Even if racing is not your passion, you will want to see Oriental Park, one of the loveliest racetracks in the world, enclosed in spectacular formal gardens and flowering hedges. Races are run daily (except Mondays) during the winter season, and the track is twenty minutes from town by car. You can also get there by trolley (#U14 or #U4), taken opposite the Plaza Hotel, or by bus (#21 or #22), taken at Calles San José and Zulueta. Grandstand admission is fifty cents, but we suggest that you treat yourself to clubhouse tickets, which cost \$1.50 for ladies, \$2.50 for men, but afford a superb view of the track as well as a chance to see the famous Jockey Club. If you really follow the horses and are staying for any length of time, a clubhouse membership, which entitles one man and three ladies to admittance during the meet, is a good investment, at \$25.00 for the season. Bets can be placed at either the pari-mutuel windows or with bookmakers who give practically the same odds.

The Jockey Club is a spacious building with stately dining halls, ballrooms, gambling rooms and retiring salons. The terrace, at the finish line, has tables and comfortable wicker arm-chairs, in which you can loll, sipping a drink as the winners

come down the stretch. Ushers scurry back and forth, taking your bets and bringing back your winnings (we hope), so there is no necessity to leave the table. Should you grow bored between races (no one has ever been able to figure out why the intervals are interminable), there is always the gaming room, with the most beautiful *décor* of all the gambling spots in Havana. And should all else fail, we can testify that the slot machines next to the bar sometimes pay off. We won the jackpot, which was lucky, for it provided carfare home that day!

Saturday and Sunday are the important racing days when the best purses are offered and Cuban society turns out to see and be seen. On these days, the display of clothes, furs and jewels outshines any fashion show.

One of the pleasantest places in the countryside around Havana is *El Sitio*, The Place, much favored by natives for discreet rendezvous. It is about twenty miles out of the city on the Sans Souci road; so you'll have to drive there. *El Sitio* is just a large open *bohío* (a countryman's thatched hut) surrounded by experimental gardens with orchids growing exotically on some of the trees. During the day, you can see the farm where specimens of all important Cuban crops are grown for the benefit of the tourist. A native shinnies up a palm tree for your edification. Big tame ducks and little doves wander nonchalantly onto the stone dance floor

which doubles as a cockpit when there are cock-fights. These are only sham fights, however. No spurs are used, and the birds are not permitted to fight to the kill.

If you want the real McCoy in cockfights, you'll have to go to the *Valla Habana*, a public cockpit in Calle Aguadulce, Jesus del Monte (a suburb of Havana), where there are fights on Monday, Wednesday and Sunday afternoons. Seats cost sixty cents to a dollar, depending on location. If you have Cuban friends who are fans, ask them to take you to the *Club Gallistico Moderno* in Vedado, where the real enthusiasts meet. Most of the members raise their own birds—a special breed of *Jerezano* cock, originally imported from Spain. Good fighters are worth hundreds of dollars, and betting during the fight often runs into three figures, the odds changing constantly, while the screaming, shouting audience tries to pick the winner.

The cocks are cared for like babies, the coxcombs shorn and feathers plucked so as not to impair fighting ability. Their own spurs are removed, and just before a contest, spurs from another bird, lacquered to hardness and sharpened to a needle point, are taped on the legs. Cubans say these artificial spurs make a "cold wound," which is more damaging than the "hot wound" inflicted by the natural spurs.

The cockpit is a round open arena covered with sawdust, surrounded with benches in tiers. Large

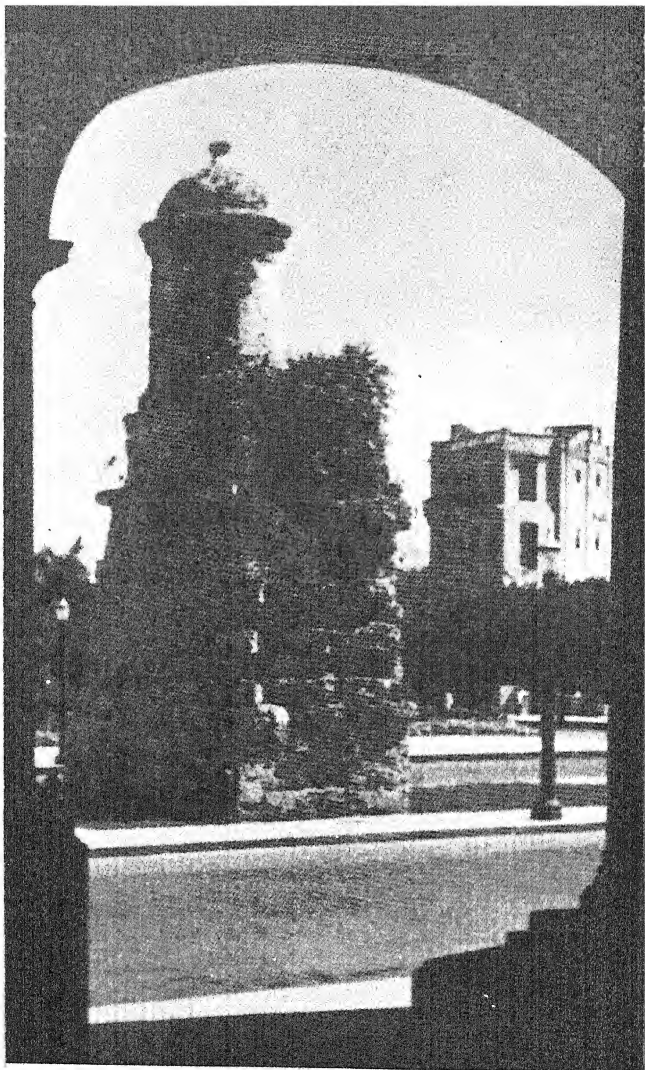
tin cages are lowered from the ceiling and the roosters, which must be equal in weight and size, are placed within. The cages are lifted simultaneously at the start of the fight and the cocks spring out with rising hackles. From then on, no holds are barred, no fouls declared, until one of the cocks kills the other. Most Americans won't take kindly to cockfighting, we believe. The beginning of the match is exciting, but after one of the birds has been seriously wounded, it is no longer a contest but merely a matter of waiting to see something killed. Since it's a typical Cuban sport, however, you should go at least once.

When you want to spend some time in the country, plan a little expedition to *Rio Cristal*, about a half hour from town by car or bus (#76 is the one to take, from the corner of Calles Galiano and Dragones). In 1776, when our forefathers were freezing at Valley Forge, *Rio Cristal* was already a peaceful nunnery; later it became the residence of General Aleman, who lived there to be near his brick factory. Unfortunately, the General appears to have been an irreverent soul, for he destroyed the convent altar. Ten years ago Enrique Berenguer bought the house and lands and began his tremendous job of restoration. Today the ex-nunnery stands as a decorative example of Colonial Cuban architecture, with its rosy old tiled roofs, picturesque barred windows and flowering vines growing over all, while the gardens that slope down to



HOTEL NACIONAL

THE GOMEZ MONUMENT ON MALECÓN



FRANCESCO ENRIQUEZ

REMNANT OF ORIGINAL WALL WHICH SURROUNDED  
HAVANA

the Cristal River are a miracle of tropical luxuriance.

What started as a hobby is now *Señor* Berenguer's life work. For some years he has opened the estate to the public. You can lunch outdoors on the broad veranda and enjoy the view, or indoors where the old Spanish tiles depicting the life of Don Quixote, or the murals painted by the proprietor himself, will fascinate you. Berenguer allows his artistic inclinations full sway; every rock on the place is fantastically decorated and he repaints the murals every few months!

There's a bar, of course, and if you ask for one of the drinks he has invented, made with native fruit juices, *Señor* Berenguer will be a friend for life.

There are other things to do at *Rio Cristal*. You can fish, row or swim in the river, and there is dancing on a spacious open-air dance-floor. Cubans come here for moonlight picnics, with roast suckling pig (*lechón asado*) as the *pièce de résistance*. Little summer houses, scattered near the river's edge, have tables of intricately matched tiles. You can eat *al fresco* and listen to the giant bamboos sighing. If you fall in love with the place as completely as we did, you may even want to stay for a while; several cottages are for rent by the week or month.

You will be lucky if you find the owner present when you go. *Señor* Berenguer is a local celebrity who wanders around, sporting mammoth boutonnières to match his tie, greeting guests, chatting with friends. Regardless of his other manifold ac-

complishments, his handwriting alone would earn him a place in any hall of fame. Ask for his autograph and you will see what we mean. It's Spencerian calligraphy, so lacy and elaborate that when a letter arrives from *Señor B.* our hall boy brings it up with the reverence a document of state receives.

COJIMAR, across the harbor, is another place you'll need a car to reach, but it is worth the effort. *Cogi Mar*, "I took the sea," is what the name means. About a half hour's drive brings you to the town, down a sloping road overlooking a half-moon bay. This is the "Goat Beach," once the fashionable bathing resort for Havana, but now sadly bare, for they carted away all the sand when *La Playa* was developed! There are boating and bathing in the protected, silent cove. Look for an interesting old block-house called Little Morro, dating way back to pirate days. We lunched on the tiled porch of the unpretentious little inn overlooking the ocean's sweep. It was calm and bright, ages away from the busy hum of Havana. When we commented on this, our Cuban friend remarked that the natives of Cojimar were considered real country folk; many never even get to the city for years on end.

As we left and ascended the hill, we noticed a spacious new building, the Tuberculosis Preventorium. When there is an active case of tuberculosis in a poor Cuban family, susceptible younger children are sent, at Government expense, to these pre-



ventoriums to be built up with sunshine and plenty of vitamins. Under Batista's guidance, the Government has been waging an intensive and efficient campaign against the White Plague for several years. As part of the plan, a system of hospitalization centers, clinics and these preventoriums, extends completely throughout the island. Quite an achievement, when you consider that, only a few years past, modern medical methods were practically unknown in the outlying rural sections.

It is taken for granted that every tourist goes swimming at *La Playa*, the public bathing beach in Marianao. If you have no card to one of the private clubs, *La Playa* substitutes nicely; its half mile of white sand dotted with thatched palm umbrellas is inviting, and the water is the same turquoise blue as the water at the private beaches. There's a pleasant *al fresco* restaurant and an open-air *bohío* where you can dance. Go early and spend the entire day. Lockers cost a dollar on week-ends, sixty cents week-days, and a monthly ticket can be bought for considerably less. Bus #32, trolley #U4 or taxi (\$2.50 for the round trip) gets you there.

Do you crave active sports? Havana can supply them. Besides golf, available to tourists at the Country Club, Jaimanitas or Rovers, as noted before, there is good horseback riding, since the winding roads of the *Bosque* make perfect bridle paths. Reliable mounts can be rented at *Picadero*

*Miramar* on Quinta Avenida at Sixth, at about a dollar for a whole morning's ride.

Currently, bicycling is one of the town's popular sports and the broad stretch of Malecón seems specially built for this purpose. Go to Cuba #4 or Cuba #6 to rent a wheel for twenty-five cents an hour.

If you like to shoot and are bored with the rifle galleries, try your luck with quail or pigeon. The *Club Cazadores del Lucero* is the organization to contact. The *Cazadores* also arrange skeet shoots on the club's grounds in which visitors may participate. Or if sailing is your passion, you can indulge at *La Playa*, where boats are available. Craft can be rented nearer town, too, at the Almendares River, through Dr. Charles Roca, Calzada del Cerro.

If the foregoing suggestions don't whet your appetite, then what about a spot of shark fishing? Here, spread before you is the Gulf Stream, just a niblick shot off Malecón, where the blue-green waters change to ultra-violet. What's the Gulf Stream's importance? Just this, that it is the main highway for an amazing variety of ocean life, which seeks milder waters and follows the current north-east.

Garbaging is what we would call shark fishing, for you simply follow the sharks that follow the garbage barges. Your launch, hired at a cost of \$25.00 a day, puts out from either Havana harbor or Al-

mendares River. Ask about the *Caiman* or the *Nieves* at your hotel; both are readily available. The sharks aren't hooked at all; nor is any bait used. Why waste bait when *Señor Tiburón* has his mind set on garbage? Either spearing him in the head or harpooning him does the trick. When he is pulled in, your trophy may be one of several varieties: ground shark, shovel-nose, hammerhead, dreaded mako. All are plentiful around Morro. Even the gigantic whale shark has been sighted in these waters and the pilot whale, too. Well, you've caught your shark. Keep his jaws for a souvenir. The rest of him won't be thrown away but thriftily sold by the crew. Shark-leather and shark-oil industries are thriving around Havana.

Shark-spearing may be exciting but it's not real fishing. The greatest thrill any sportsman can enjoy is the white marlin run in Havana's waters each spring. It seems strange that so many big-game fishermen who follow the marlin far and wide don't know about this. During April and May, there is the greatest run of whites in the world, with the average about sixty pounds. In June, July and August, the big blues come. July is their best month, and during this same season you have a chance at the stripers, too, which run about 250 pounds. Early in the morning, your launch takes you out into the Gulf Stream and you drift with baits deep. At eleven, when the trade winds blow, roughing the surface, you troll. The best time to go

trolling for marlin is around two in the afternoon, and your expedition ends at seven. We hope you break a record!

If your interest isn't confined to marlin, there are all the other fish that make other waters famous—wahoo, during the winter when it's pretty rough, dolphin, bonito and albacore, kingfish and barracuda.

Look for the flame fishermen some night, as you drive along Quinta Avenida toward *Las Fritas*. You turn west and go over one block to where the sea stops you. It is not built up much here, and a finger of land projects out with, surprise, a bar and a few rough tables and chairs, right on the beach. A few hundred feet from shore, and parallel to it, runs a sea wall loosely built of rocks. Here the fishermen take their stand, brandishing great flaming torches over the water, so that the scene has a macabre effect like something out of an Edgar Allan Poe mystery. They're fishing for *langostas*, which get curious when they see the light and pop out of rocky clefts to see what's going on. As soon as the quarry is spotted, oil is poured on the water, stilling its ripples, so that Mr. Lobster is clearly seen. In a trice he is grabbed and poked into a sack. Then you smack your lips over him next day. If you want to watch activities close at hand, find the fishermen before they get out to the breakwater. Their base of operations is usually the little sandy cove a few hundred feet farther out toward *La Playa*.

During the winter season, Havana holds a gigantic Winter Sports Carnival, featuring boxing matches, swimming meets, pro tennis, every kind of sporting event, with world-famous teams and athletic stars competing against the Cubans. Look for announcements of these events in the *Havana Post*. At all the competitions you'll find that watching the audience, which takes sides audibly and violently, is just as much fun as watching the players. Incidentally, the Cubans are much better contenders for sports crowns than is generally conceded. In baseball, for instance, there are outstanding Cuban stars. The big-league American teams that come to play against the Cubans don't always go home as victors. Cubans have an ardent interest in sports and the Government does its part to foster this interest. A special department, the *Comisión General Nacional de Deportes*, under the administration of Colonel Jaime Marine, oversees all Cuban sports activities. There is an elaborate system of sports centers in the principal cities of each province, all reporting to the central athletic office. Homeless youths are fed, given medical attention and schooled, in addition to being trained by professionals. They turn out remarkable athletes, too. We watched youngsters of thirteen and fourteen put on boxing matches that were certainly on a par with our own Golden Gloves competitors.

*Jai alai* is the fast and furious three-sided wall game that came to Cuba via the Basque country. You can watch it nightly at the *Fronton* on Con-

cordia and Lucena, or the *Habana-Madrid* at Padre Varela 803. It's a dizzy spectacle unless you understand the game, but we liked the red berets on the bookmakers and the way bets are tossed back and forth in little ball-shaped containers with the odds changing too fast to follow after each play. The athletes display great temperament. Don't be surprised to see them beating their heads against the wall in anguish should they miss a shot. Admission is \$1.65 for tourists, much less for natives.

If you feel like an evening at the theater, go to see a Cuban play. We took in one of the heavy dramas presented at *Teatro Campo Amor*, where a stock company offers a new play each week. The cupid-covered curtain, complete with peep-hole, and the center prompter's box, shrouded in black velvet, are novelties. We anticipated an involved affair; we got it, including unrequited love, midnight intrigue in milady's boudoir and a beetle-browed heavy. In direction and acting technique, all, down to the final swooning embrace, is high-flown and romantic Victorian. At the end of each act, waves of excited comment sweep the house. During intermission, everything gets lively. Up go the lorgnettes, which the Cubans so aptly call *impertinentes*. When you come down the aisle, you run the gauntlet of curious but kindly stares. Cubans are warm and attentive audiences, thrilling audibly to torrid romance, sighing seriously over problems, weeping copiously at heavy tragedy. Keep

one eye on your neighbors at the theater in Havana and observe them afterward discussing the play as they file out. All of this is *art* and taken very seriously.

For a real kick, go to see one of the weekly satirical revues at the *Teatro Marti* at Dragones #54, a big barn of a place with steel ribs overhead, a baroque naked-lady curtain and the prompter's box sticking out like a sore thumb. A dense crowd packs the place, poor people mostly, since these presentations are dedicated to the *chusma* or masses. Very lively productions they are, too, living satires that poke fun at Havana's public and private affairs, with the stock characters of the witty Negro, the pompous politician and the blundering *Gallego* who is the inevitable fall guy. Of course, unless you speak Spanish, the humor loses much of its meaning; so we hope you manage to go with Cuban friends. The dialogue acts are like our vaudeville turns, but the material dramatizes actual daily happenings which you may have read about in the newspapers the day before. The audience roars with delight at the salty wisecracks, adores the lampooning of prominent *Habaneros*, loves the way the Government is taken for a ride and shrieks encouragement. Between the dialogue acts, a pony chorus comes on, and there are fantastic specialty numbers or spectacular tear-jerking living pictures. We saw only half a program, a little endeavor of some fifteen scenes, all about the European War coming to Havana, including one act laid in a bomb-shelter!

To have this followed by "Vienna Woods" was pretty staggering, a pastoral bit with hefty chorus girls in purple and silver galloping around the trees. The living pictures were an eye-opener. We shall never get over the "Aero-Naval Combat." Up rose the curtain on the realistic poop-deck of a battleship, to the roar of two guns that actually pulled back, discharged and gave off flame and smoke. Across the back of the stage, another battleship advanced cannonading, winking with lights. Two large airships and a balloon fired and zoomed across the stage on wire pulleys, dropping bombs. The noise and confusion was deafening; the audience, collectively, seemed to be bursting a blood vessel with excitement. Finally, with one nerve-racking report, down tumbled the huge blackened carcass of a plane, and the curtain descended.

We take our hats off to the creator of this complicated *mise en scène* and still think there must have been black magic somewhere. How on earth did it work? All told, the satirical revues are enormously interesting. In contrast to the artificial and affected mood of the legitimate plays, they offer pungent humor, sharp insight into daily life. In *genre* they are closest to vulgar comedies of manners, with an element of our own recently developed "living-newspaper" form.

Vaudeville is presented at the *Teatro Nacional*, facing Parque Central. Most of the acts are from the States. We liked particularly the paradox of exhibition ice-skating in the tropics. Other side-



shows are clustered there, much like the flea circuses and penny arcades around Broadway. Our military friend was enthralled by the crime chamber of horrors with its didactic slogan of "He Who Does It Pays!" He claimed he was steering us through this Cuban version of believe-it-or-not for our own edification, but actually we could barely pry him loose.

Some balmy, moon-bright night, when you feel the urge to do something as glamorous as the evening, go down to the docks near El Temple at Calles San Pedro and O'Reilly and hire one of the little covered-wagon-like *guadaños* for a row around the harbor. To make the occasion really special, take along a couple of street musicians, complete with guitars, for sound-effects. All night long, for a couple of *pesetas*, they will entertain you with plaintive Cuban songs as you lean back and trail a hand through the calm water. Sometimes, cruise boats, blazing with lights, are anchored in the harbor and you can be ferried up to say hello. Or go out of the bay to the other side of Morro Castle and get a worm's-eye view of the rugged old battlements rising sharply from the coral cliffs.

Tell the boatman to row over to Casablanca, a sleepy old town across the bay. Casablanca is romantic at any time but most enchanting at four in the morning, drenched in moonlight and uncannily empty of all signs of life, like some old ghost city. Wander up the cobbled hill and notice the funny

old houses built on different levels. And look at the dignified white house with its twin stairways, on top of the hill, for which the town was named. Casablanca's difference in architecture and atmosphere from Havana is astonishing; it is more like Fort-de-France in Martinique than anything Cuban.

Stop at the little dive of a bar along the dock, patronized by local fishermen, on your way back to your boat, if you want a drink. The one policeman of Casablanca usually hangs out here; it is the only night life the village has.

Back in Havana when you have paid off your boatman (about eighty cents and tip is what the jaunt should cost, though a direct trip to Casablanca and back should be only ten cents per person) linger at the dock right by El Temple to see the fish being scooped out of cages kept there. The big wooden affairs are loaded daily with the catch brought in by the fishing boats, then lowered to the depths of the harbor. Every morning from two on, the market trucks arrive to buy fish for that day. The cages are hauled up with little derricks and their silvered cargo is spilled into capacious round baskets which get weighed on the spot, then briskly dumped into the receptacles of the waiting trucks. Big red-snapper to little pompano, every size and shape of fish is among those present. No wonder the seafood in Havana is so fresh and good.

Then, if you want breakfast before bed, you

might imitate some of the gayer Cuban *caballeros*. They like to stop an early-morning milk wagon and buy a bottle, then proceed to the nearest café, where they eat *pan tostado* (toast) and drink down the milk, claiming it removes all traces of an evening's dissipations.

Many vacationers want to get away from it all, for a complete change, but we think it is fun to take a busman's holiday and see how your profession is carried on in another part of the world. Doctors should make a point of seeing the new hospitals, efficient modern institutions that compare favorably with the best of ours. The new maternity hospital opposite Camp Columbia provides even the poorest mothers-to-be with free care in private-patient-type surroundings. Sanatoriums and clinics for the care of tubercular patients are accomplishing wonders under the direction of the *Consejo Nacional de Tuberculosis* and the building (opposite the *Ciudad Militar*) is definitely noteworthy; almost a whole city of clinics, wards, laboratories, X-ray rooms, pharmacies.

Are you a lawyer? It is fascinating to attend court in Havana. Trial procedure is enwrapped in complicated formalities with *abogados* (lawyers) and their assistants, *procuradores*, orating dramatically with fine Latin fervor. If you send your card up to the presiding judge, you will be escorted to a seat of honor within the railing. The Cubans are hospitable, even in a court room!

Printers or lithographers should see the *Compañía Litográfica de La Habana*, one of the largest lithograph plants in the world, where every method of lithographing is employed, from early stone-work to the most advanced type of photo-offset. This is where the lottery tickets are printed. Four presses are kept solely for that purpose and thousands and thousands of tickets are run off daily to supply Cuba's hopefuls.

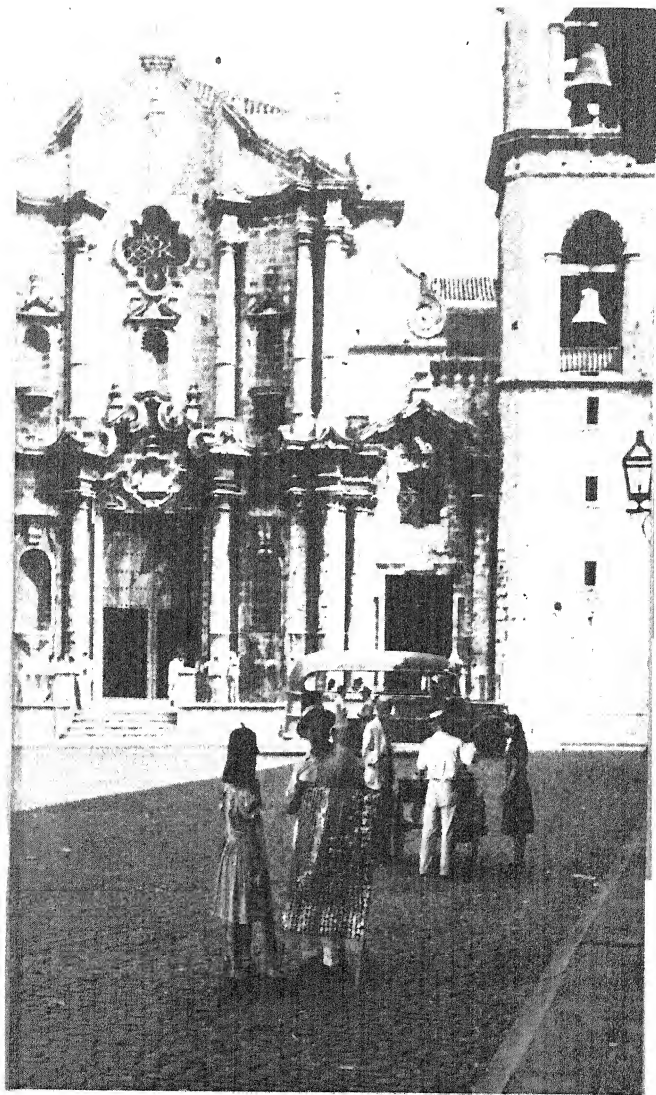
If you are a teacher, the University of Havana, where tuition is only \$24.00 a year, should be interesting. Or visit the convents and the schools run by the regional *centros*. For manufacturers, there are the underwear and hosiery factories established in recent years; for farmers, the sugar, pineapple, tobacco and coffee plantations. Are you active in lodge work back home? There is always a Cuban edition. Rotarians meet on Thursdays at the Nacional, the Lions on Tuesdays at the Sevilla-Biltmore, the American Chamber of Commerce is active and the Masons are a force in the community. Visiting members are given a royal welcome and next day's social columns probably will carry the report of your visit. Whatever your profession or vocation, see the Havana version.

*Reiteration:* Walk, don't ride. Walk as much as you can and see the city close at hand. Stroll past the Dionisio Velasco mansion, fronting Zayas Parque, on Calles Carcel and Zulueta. None of the Robber Baron mansions in American cities can hold

a candle to this block-square, gigantic palace of gray stone with its gorgeous pillars and showy carving. It's as large as a hotel, and we were staggered to learn that the family is only a twosome. For a neat contrast to the Velasco home, walk past the *habitaciones* (tenement houses) in the San Miguel district and see how the other, and submerged, half lives. Walk around to the Bacardi Building, one of the city's few skyscrapers, and look at the elegant nude ladies in color high up on the façade. Walk over to the shiny new firehouse on Zulueta Street. It is similar to our own variety, but the fire engines have an interesting appendage—a round water tank. Water pressure in Havana is so low that unless the firemen bring their own water along, they'd never put out the fire. Walk along the Malecón and watch the fishermen trying their luck, or the street urchins balancing precariously on the sea-wall's ledge. Look for the two or three old homes which you will spot because their rears face the sea. They are small, weatherbeaten, with sloping tiled roofs, an effective study in contrasts, huddled as they are between granite-pillared palaces. Walk through Peña Pobre, the narrowest street in Havana, almost at the rear of El Angel Church, built in the days when Havana still was surrounded by a wall. Then see the modern shopping district on San Rafael, Neptuno and Galiano Streets where Cuban women go for finery. Wherever you walk you will find novel surprises, many of which would be overlooked completely if you sight see only by car.

When you're convinced you have done everything, when you are sure there is nothing new to try, go to the nearest corner and hail a *guagua*. *Guaguas* are the little-but-oh-my buses that tear down the streets every second or so. Yes, you are in for an experience when you ride the *guaguas*. That name, pronounced *wah-wah*, can only be inspired, we are sure, by the despairing wails of the uninitiated. First of all, there is their incredible rate of speed. *Guaguas* put Aladdin's magic carpet completely in the shade, flying along madly, while you clutch your hat and try to stay on the slippery seat. If you're unfortunate enough to draw the front seat, it's even more harrowing, for there isn't any door; the sidewalk skims dizzily past, right under your cringing nose. Then, too, it is hardly reassuring to find, when you can focus properly, that far from watching the road, the driver is concentrating all his attention on you, the American passenger, regarding you fixedly and covertly in his mirror. Or, if he isn't studying you, there is every chance he will be absorbed in a lively discussion with another passenger, gesticulating animatedly with one, if not both hands. Yet, erratic as their progress seems, the *guaguas* come to no grief, but careen serenely along like miniature juggernauts. They skim past trolleys, just miss head-on encounters with other cars, and still manage to give you a view of the city that can't be had in any other way.

The nicest thing about *guaguas* is the way they



FRANCESCO ENRIQUEZ

COLON CATEDRAL, HAVANA

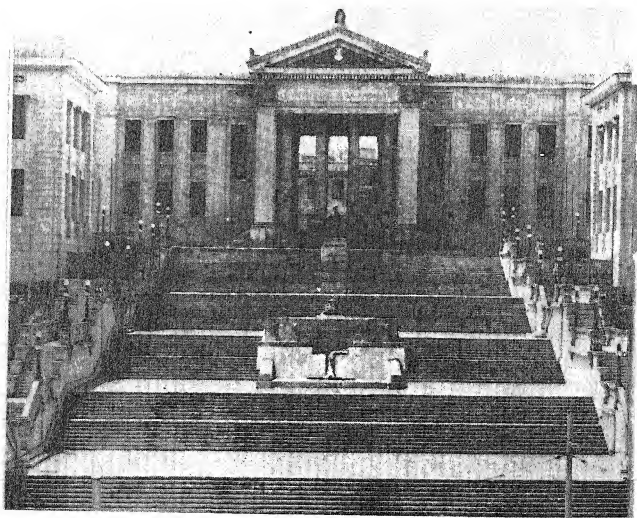


LOUIS HAMBURG

A CROSS-EYED ANGEL LEADS A PROCESSION DURING  
HOLY WEEK

MAIN ENTRANCE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAVANA

PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS





stop—or don't stop. If a lady passenger wants to get off, she signals to the assistant conductor who pulls the signal rope three times. This indicates to the driver that it is a woman, and he comes to a stop. For full speed ahead, after someone has alighted, the conductor gives two rings. But if it is only a man getting off, he just signals once. Then the *guagua* doesn't stop. It just slows down a bit, and the passenger has to make a leap for life with all the athletic abandon of a Wild West movie hero!

## HOLIDAY IN HAVANA

Tourists who are in Havana at holiday time really get a break. They're actually reaping double dividends, for, besides the pleasure of being on vacation, they can share in the gaiety of the Cubans. There's much more to see, much more to do. Like all Latins, the Cubans adore any excuse for a holiday, so much so that the spirit prevails long after the holiday itself is over. During the last week in January we still saw brilliantly lit, ornamented Christmas trees in front of some of the houses!

CHRISTMAS festivities continue past New Year's, while gossip about the celebration goes on for weeks afterward. There is no Cuban Santa Claus. Instead, there are the Wise Men, the *Reyes Magos*, who leave presents in the shoes of good children, or switches for the naughty ones on January Sixth. Roast pig is to *Pascuas* what plum pudding is to our Yuletide. Everybody eats *turrón*, too, delicious

almond-paste candy especially imported from Spain for the occasion. After Cock's Crow Mass, Christmas Eve or *Noche Buena* is traditionally celebrated in the bosom of the family with the *cena* (midnight supper), for which even the youngest child may stay up.

The merrymaking reaches its height on New Year's Eve, when all the buildings in and around Havana, even the biggest, are strung with electric lights, just like Coney Island. In the country, there are *fiestas* with street dancing; in Havana the New Year is ushered in with extravagant galas at all the clubs. The Grand Casino on New Year's Eve presents a brilliant, European-flavored scene, the great halls thronged with thousands of people. The women are bright as parakeets in pretentious gowns, their elaborate coiffures towering high with bird-of-paradise plumes or aigrettes. At midnight waiters gravely hand you a saucer on which twelve grapes are neatly arrayed, six purple and six green. These you must eat to insure prosperity for the coming twelve months—an interesting custom from Spain, we understand, probably a hangover from the rites celebrated in honor of Bacchus by the Romans.

Early Mass on New Year's Day is an exotic affair. Many people go right on to church from their celebrations, and lavishly costumed women mingle with others somber in black and *mantillas*. The rich church *décor* and the gold-encrusted vestments of the clergy combine to form a background for a dazzling ceremony.

CARNIVAL transforms Havana into a mad, surrealist kaleidoscope. Buildings festooned with lights, parades of fantastically decorated cars, dominoed figures flitting through the street, serpentina and confetti piled high on sidewalks, colossal masquerade balls, *conga* lines hitching down the Malecón like a lot of happy sleep-walkers, and music—music everywhere—give the city a dream-like quality completely removed from reality. Originally a three-day fête, Carnival now extends through the six weeks preceding Shrove Tuesday. During this period in Havana, it is impossible to believe that elsewhere a world is soberly going about the business of living and dying.

The peak of all the revelry is the Negro *Conga Comparsas* (dance groups), once more permitted through city streets. Until a few years ago they were banned because, says rumor, costuming and crowds could so easily camouflage attempted insurrection. The *comparsas* are really a great city-wide dance contest. Each *barrio* (ward) enters its own group, which competes against the others every week-end for the six weeks of Carnival, with prizes awarded on the final night. It is an unforgettable sight! We sat in the main reviewing stand in front of the Capitol. There are others along the Prado, and all the street cafés do a brisk business. Thousands of spectators line the streets, packed close; others watch from balconies, windows and rooftops.

The first thing you hear is the dull throb of the

drums. The first thing you see is the firefly gleam of the candles in the great *conga* lamps. Down the Prado they come, *comparsa* after *comparsa*, from nine in the evening until two in the morning or later. After doing a turn before the reviewing stand, they dance back to their own neighborhoods, where the revel continues until dawn breaks over Morro Castle.

The *farolas* that lead each *comparsa* are huge multicolored lanterns like little houses, perched high atop long poles. They are built of silk or paper, fancifully decorated with tin and ribboned streamers. Candles flame inside. This is carrying the torch with a vengeance! The stalwarts who do the job advance, twirling their poles dextrously, so that the lanterns do a dance, too.

Now the dancers come, slowly proceeding in long files with the easy, gliding *conga* step. They are brilliantly costumed, glistening with tinsel, glittering with rhinestones. Every group has its own *conga* band bringing up the rear, cow-bells, drums and all.

Each *comparsa* has its particular theme, too. One group, costumed like *guajiros* (countrymen), pantomimed guerrilla fighting during the Spanish-American War, complete to charging forward and firing off cannon. Another, dressed in calico with headdresses like miniature tubs, performed a dance routine that mimicked laundresses. Some competitors chose Oriental themes, which gave a chance to display the bright-hued silks, plumed turbans

and floating clouds of gauze the Negroes adore. Most intriguing of all was the *comparsa*, representing the *ancien régime* in France, right down to the satin knee-breeches and powdered wigs. If there is anything more spectacular than a throng of brawny blacks conga-ing, decked out in full Louis XIV costume, we have yet to see it!

Masquerade balls are held everywhere during Carnival, and the affairs at the *centros* really defy description. They decorate their rococo palaces with flamboyant scenery representing sylvan grottoes, caves or courts of love, set up two orchestras on each floor so that the music never stops, and throw their doors open to the public. Thousands attend. Admission is sixty cents for the men, and ladies are on the house! Each floor is jam-packed with a steaming, seething mob of revelers, clad in bizarre disguises (even the Ku Klux Klan was in evidence, *estilo Cubano*) and dancing with vigorous enjoyment. On the top floor the music is comparatively sedate; this is where the chaperones bring their charges and the dancers come to warm up. As you descend the great central stairways, the music gets successively hotter until, on the ground floor, the music is frenzied and the dancers are *arrollando* (Cuban slang which means "going to town"). At *Los Dependientes* you reach this floor through what is naively advertised as "The Tunnel of Love." It is a narrow dark passageway decorated like a *bohío*, closely lined with couples in the throes of love-making, completely oblivious to the crowds streaming

past. A happy combination of the best features of Lovers' Lane and a Broadway subway during the rush hour!

Often, unescorted Cuban girls of good family attend the balls in groups of twos and threes. The anonymity of masked dominoes is thoroughly respected; so this is a rare opportunity for more sheltered Latin daughters to indulge in a little mild oat-sowing. A few girls will go together, dance with all partners who present themselves, then leave in a body. Any effort to discover their identities will be completely squelched.

*Centro Gallego*, *Centro Asturiano* and *Centro de Dependientes* run balls every week-end during Carnival. In fact, last season the *Dependientes'* masques were such a success that they had a little extra *fiesta* season of their own and gave three balls after the rest of the city had settled down to normalcy. Don't miss the chance to see one. Nothing like them ever happens in our country; probably the saturnalias of the ancient Romans are the nearest comparison.

Children's balls are held by the clubs on week-end afternoons, amusing because they are such perfect replicas of the adult affairs. Only in a Latin land would you find children imitating the behavior patterns of their parents so completely. There is nothing childish about these parties. The costuming, music, dancing—all are miniature versions of what the grownups like.

Carnival ends on Shrove Tuesday in a climax of

music, dancing and government-provided fireworks that flame out over the harbor.

EASTER begins with Ash Wednesday. Overnight Cuba goes from one extreme to the other and concentrates devout attention on Holy Week. Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, quiet cloaks the city; night clubs shut down; all music is stilled; the streets are filled with *mantilla-ed* women, dressed in black, on their way to or from church. As in all Catholic countries, everything is at a standstill during the four days before Easter Sunday. Wednesday and Thursday are half-holidays, Friday a full holiday. Naturally, offices, stores and public buildings are closed.

While sightseeing in the normal sense is almost impossible during this time, there are interesting compensations for tourists.

You can visit the churches for Mass. The splendid accouterments and solemn chants make the spectacle colorful and moving. Holy Thursday is the best time to go, when Cubans visit at least twenty-one churches during the day. You can see the Passion movie depicting the whole story of the Life, the Crucifixion, and the Resurrection, all in color, shown at many theaters throughout the city. Most interesting of all, some of the churches have religious processions, in which the images of the Saints and the Holy Trinity are carried through the streets. When these take place at night they are especially dramatic, for the processions are by torchlight. Drive out to the little town of Arroyo

Arenas, ten minutes beyond city limits, on Palm Sunday to see the sumptuously robed, larger-than-life statue of Jesus the Nazarene solemnly borne from the adjacent village of El Cano through the streets, up winding marble steps to the Hermita de Arroyo Arenas which crowns a high hill. Petitioners, begging favors of the saint who is enthroned on his gold-leaf catafalque within the church during Holy Week, ascend the steps on their knees. The *fiesta* continues through Easter Sunday and Monday, and the beggars who come from the surrounding countryside in the hope of picking up a few pennies, practically pitch camp on the church's steps. At night when the building is a blaze of intricately patterned red and blue light, you can see them sleeping there, while frenzied activity rages round them. There are gambling at night, peddlers hawking religious medals and holy candles, dancing and music. But everyone who attends the *fiesta* first pays his respects to Jesus the Nazarene and leaves an offering in the church's coffers.

On the day before Easter everyone dresses up because this is Glorious Saturday. Night clubs come to life, music blares forth everywhere and general celebration is in order. On Easter Sunday in Havana the churches are thronged, but there is no parading afterward in the Fifth-Avenue sense. Many things which seem irreverent to unenlightened Northern eyes go on as a matter of course. The Easter morning we were there, the peace and quiet of the neighborhood was shattered by loud



explosions. Upon inquiry we learned that no revolution was in progress, but that fireworks were punctuating a political speech being made near by. "So they can see the speaker means what he says," it was explained to us. There was a children's ball over at *Los Dependientes*, too, with four floors full of dancing and noise. None of this is as paradoxical as it seems. The Cubans live with their religion daily, are on much more familiar terms with it than we are with ours. The holiness of Easter Week and the high regard for the sanctity of this period are very real in Havana, where sacred things are regarded in so homely and friendly a manner.

OTHER HOLIDAYS: *Saint Christopher's Day*, November 19th, is the most important Saints' Day of the many which Havana celebrates, for the patron saint of travelers is also the patron saint of the city. Formerly all business places closed and church-going was in order. Now the day is observed principally by women and children. The Templete, which encloses the spot where the first Mass in the New World was said, is thrown open, and anyone who has a favor to ask of the Saint must visit the Templete and then go to the Cathedral to pray to him. Strict silence has to be observed during the day, for if a word is uttered, the Saint will not grant the prayer.

The birthday of José Martí, Cuba's premier patriot, on January 28th, is celebrated chiefly with parades. Schools turn out *en masse*, each group

carrying enormous and elaborate wreaths of flowers tied up with vivid satins, to place at the foot of the Marti Memorial in Parque Central. If you are stopping at a hotel in town, don't expect to get too much sleep on Marti Day. The parade starts at nine in the morning and continues all day. Participants begin to assemble at seven. Every group has its own band; all play at the same time, and the noise is terrifying. In the evening there are special dinners honoring Marti, and if you would really like to hear the Cubans overflow with torrents of flowery oratory, just attend one of these.

CUBAN INDEPENDENCE DAY, May 20th, is punctuated by fireworks, parades and political speeches. Since Cuba has been a republic for a mere thirty-nine years, the struggle for freedom is still vividly close to the people. The occasion is, therefore, observed with far more fervor than our own Fourth of July, which has come to mean the official start of the week-ending season and accidents to small boys, more than anything else.

MAINE DAY, February 15th, is a political holiday marking the anniversary of the sinking of the battleship *Maine*, the prime reason for our subsequent entrance into the Spanish-American War. One of the traditional features of the day is the speech always made at the foot of the Maine Monument on the Malecon by the incumbent American Ambassador to Cuba. Cuban and American flags decorate the city, while dignitaries everywhere hold forth at great length about the close ties that bind the two Republics.

THE 4TH OF SEPTEMBER is, however, Cuba's most important political holiday at the present time. That was the day on which Carlos Manuel de Cespedes and his clique of army officers were overthrown in 1933, and the group to which President Fulgencio Batista belonged (he was a mere corporal, then) assumed control of the country. The city is decorated as if for *fiesta*, 4th of September colors are draped over every available inch of space, and the activities that take place are a combination of Carnival, Independence Day and Easter, rolled into one. Masses are said in thanks for the country's deliverance from its oppressors; everybody who has a Government job (and some who have not) makes speeches; the Army, the Navy and the Police (who comprise at least half the population) all proudly parade in full-dress uniform. Beer and dancing are free in police stations, and the noise of fireworks, horns and music is unceasing. After the tumult and the shouting have died down it takes days to recover from this patriotic spree!

LANDMARKS, PUBLIC BUILDINGS  
AND OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

(Note: This is by no means a complete list. We give some of the high spots, but if you are so inclined, weeks can be spent visiting churches, convents, monuments, fortresses and historical places. If you can stand more after you've done the following list, see the Tourist Commission.)

**CAPITOLIO.** Facing Parque Central. Visiting hours, nine to five. Admission, twenty-five cents. Modeled after our own Capitol at Washington, the interior has marble pillars, expanses of carved mahogany, draperies of the velvet used for peers' robes, specially woven in England, mosaic and gold-leaf ceilings, all indescribably magnificent but with a curiously Victorian air. See the twenty-four-carat diamond in the center of the floor of the main *sala*, marker for the starting point of the Central Highway, also the gigantic gilded statue of the "Goddess of the Republic." Cubans are proud that she is the second largest indoor statue in the world.

**PARQUE CENTRAL.** At the south end of the Prado. The Columbus Circle of Havana. The broad walks are a gathering place for guides, taxi-drivers, peddlers, tourists and idling natives. The *Centro Gallego*, *Teatro Nacional*, *Centro Asturiano* and the *Manzana de Gomez* face the plaza, and the beautiful monument to José Martí stands there too.

COLON CATEDRAL. In Cathedral Square. The remains of Columbus were supposed to have been buried here until the end of the Spanish-American War. There is a wealth of marble sculpture, paintings and stained glass. The main altar is a complicated mass of gold, onyx, marble and varied woods. Unfortunately, the church is being modernized by some misguided souls; the hoary old walls are painted to resemble a theatrical back-drop, and the holy water is dispensed from the kind of liquid soap containers found in public washrooms! This is certainly one place where progress is of dubious value. There is a museum in the Cathedral, where for a twenty-five-cent fee you can gaze upon the gorgeous antique vestments still used by the clergy, exquisitely embroidered in virgin gold that never tarnishes; the six-hundred-pound, nine-feet-tall, sterling-silver monstrance carried in the Corpus Christi processions; and interesting examples of Colonial Cuban jewelry, paintings and other relics.

CATHEDRAL SQUARE, only a block from the waterfront, is one of the oldest and most picturesque spots in the city. Enclosed by the Cathedral and ancient homes, paved in the same cobblestones originally laid down by the Spaniards in the sixteenth century, it is a vestige of antiquity that retains all its original charm, despite the *maracas* and junk-jewelry peddlers who haunt it. Opposite the Cathedral is the Havana Club Rum Company's free bar, housed in the fine old palace built by the Conde de Bayona in 1720. With its wildly over-

grown patio and cool, dim *salas*, it is a perfect place to relax after a bout of sightseeing.

FRANCISCAN CHURCH AND CONVENT. On San Franciscan Plaza, near the waterfront. Now occupied by the Cuban Post Office and Telegraph Company. Built in 1730, it is a good example of the massive architecture of the time, suggesting a fortress rather than a place of worship. The three-storied tower served a double purpose: as a landmark for returning voyagers and as a lookout from which to sight pirates.

SANTA CLARA CONVENT. Calles Luz, Cuba and Sol. One of the city's oldest buildings, now converted into the offices of the Department of Public Works. But the quaint three-hundred-year-old patios have been carefully preserved, and here you can see three of the first buildings ever erected on the island: the first public baths, a sailors' home, the first slaughter house—all little stone huts with corrugated tiles, dating from 1519. Notice also the nuns' cemetery, the monastic cells and the sculptured mahogany ceiling in the oratory.

EL SANTO CRISTO CHURCH, facing Calle Villegas at the Plaza del Cristo. Another sixteenth-century church. Two ancient towers rise above a gaudily tiled roof, while the clean, cool interior has a quaint ceiling supported by a series of great square beams. It represents one of the earliest types of Spanish architecture in Cuba and, with the Santa Clara Convent, is one of the few specimens still to be seen.

**PLAZA DE ARMAS.** The first public square laid out by the City Fathers and for centuries the center of Havana's social, political and religious life. Now reconstructed so that it looks just as it did one hundred and fifty years ago. There are several monuments within its boundaries and many famous landmarks surround it, as:

**LA FUERZA.** On Plaza de Armas. The oldest building in the city. Built by Ferdinand de Soto. His wife kept watch from the fortress tower for her husband's return from a voyage of exploration. The romantic legend says that she died of a broken heart because he never did come back. Today La Fuerza houses the National Library.

**SUPREME COURT PALACE.** Facing Plaza de Armas. An imposing limestone building, one of the best examples of baroque Spanish architecture in the city. In the center of its patio stands a handsome bust of José Martí.

**CITY HALL.** Facing Plaza de Armas. Built in 1780, this grim palace was originally the residence of the Governor of Havana. The back of the building on Calle Mercaderes was used as a prison until the new jail was built one hundred years later. Notice the statue of Columbus in the tree-filled patio and the marble portico with the Spanish coat of arms cut on the cornice.

**EL TEMPLETE.** Facing Plaza de Armas on the east. A small classic-looking shrine that was built to enclose the spot where the first Mass in the New World was said. See the paintings that commemorate

the landing of Columbus and his men, the dedication of the Temple itself (this contains the portraits of famous *Habaneros* of the time) and the installation of the first city council of Havana.

NATIONAL MUSEUM. Calle Aguiar 508. Open from one to five daily, except Mondays. Besides a collection of paintings, the museum boasts such curiosities as the skeleton of the horse ridden by General Máximo Gomez and the rowboat in which General Maceo crossed the water at Mariel!

ATARES CASTLE, a triple-tiered stone fort at the southwest end of Havana's harbor. Once a prison, the grim balls, chains and rings in the wall to which prisoners' arms were fastened still exist. During the 4th of September revolution, soldiers besieged in the Castle are said to have escaped by wrapping themselves in sheets and rolling down hill! Probably a figment of the imagination, as so many stories of the revolution are, but we like the idea.

LA PUNTA FORTRESS. On the Malecón, at the foot of the Prado. Another hoary relic. Built in 1589 to supplement Morro's defense of the harbor. From here a chain was dragged across to Morro every night at nine; then the cannon at Cabañas was fired to signify the closing of the port for the night. Though the port is no longer closed, the cannon still booms out the nightly signal.

MORRO CASTLE AND CABAÑAS FORTRESS. Across the harbor. Take a boat from Machina Wharf or the Punta Landing. Fare: ten cents each way. No



matter how often you have seen pictures of Morro, the actual sight is ten times more impressive. Don't miss the cells below sea level, with chutes cut through the solid rock from which prisoners were thrown to the sharks. Contrary to popular belief, however, this is no longer the accepted method of execution in Cuba. *La Cabaña*, farther up the hill, is one of the largest fortresses in the world, where the custom of firing off the cannon nightly at nine is still continued. When the cannon roars, Cubans look at their watches and say "Nine o'clock" in tones of great surprise, though they should be used to it by this time.

**PRESIDENTIAL PALACE.** Facing Avenida de Las Palmas, across from the Malecón. An amazing conglomeration of about seventeen different architectural styles, topped off by a glass dome like the top layer on a wedding cake. There's a special club-room on the ground floor for the palace guards. A fragment of the original city wall that enclosed Havana in its early days is still preserved opposite the palace.

**BENIFICENCIA ASYLUM.** Calles San Lazaro and Belascoain, across from the Malecón. Orphanage for illegitimate children, established by Bishop Valdes in 1709. All children left here automatically take his surname. Still run by the Sisters of Charity. Famous for the revolving contraption at a side door where the mother places her child. When she rings a bell, the turnstile whisks around, depositing the baby inside, thus preserving its anonymity.

Right next door to Beneficencia is the astounding *Cerveza Polar* sign which shows honest-to-goodness movies from twilight until the early hours of the morning. Traffic snarls often result, since cars will park for hours in the little square, to see the show. On the next block is a miniature Coney Island with merry-go-rounds, *fritas* peddlers, side-shows and unceasing music. The din is infernal and we often wonder how the orphans manage to get to sleep at night.

COLON CEMETERY. Calles Zapata and Twelfth. Take Bus #22, 26, 27 or 28. The fanciest burying-ground in the Western Hemisphere. The amount of money lavished on the mausoleums and memorials staggers the imagination. The Firemen's Monument, for instance, cost \$79,000.00. And one bereaved Cuban spent \$150,000.00 on a mausoleum of Lalique crystal (in extremely bad taste) to house the remains of his wife. Don't believe the old wives' tale that when poor people can't afford to pay rent on graves, the bones are dug up. It isn't so.

What you should see, in this neighborhood, is the open-air flower market, one block east of the cemetery, at Twelfth and Twenty-third. For two blocks the streets are solidly lined with a riotous profusion of brilliant Cuban flowers, to catch the pious on their way to do homage at the graves. For a dollar, you can fill a whole car with gorgeous blooms.

CAMP COLUMBIA. Ciudad Militar, on the road out to Oriental Park. By Bus #21 or 22. This is the

home of Cuba's army and one of the reasons Cuban soldiers like their jobs. Probably the most de-luxe army camp in the world. Each division is quartered in its own modern building, complete with club room and barber shop. The general soldiers' club in a separate building has, as its crowning exhibit, the battered Chevrolet which Batista used during the 4th of September revolution.

TROPICAL GARDENS. Playa Estación Central trolley or bus #28. A magnificently landscaped park of hundreds of acres surrounding the *Cerveza Tropical's* brewery—and the beer is good, too. A favorite place with the Cubans for romantic rambles. On Sunday afternoons *verbenas* (*fiestas*) are held with native music, dancing and free beer.

BOTANICAL GARDENS. Principe-San Juan de Dios trolley from Parque Central. Formerly the summer residence of General Weyler, familiarly termed "the Butcher" by Cubans. Now used by the agricultural students of the University of Havana as an experimental station. A fine collection of tropical flora can be seen here.

PRINCIPE FORTRESS AND PRISON. On Principe Hill. Principe-San Juan de Dios trolley. An old bastioned fortification, now used as a jail, that was originally surrounded by a moat. Rumor says that secret passages, tunneled underneath, connect it with La Punta on the Malecón. Interesting equipment for a prison, if true. From the hill you can get one of the best views of the city.



## *The Pause for Refreshment*

SOME people rhapsodize about the sunsets over the Malecón, others recall the haunting cries of the lottery vendors, but the people who really know Havana best remember the sublime odors of Cuban cooking. As the boat enters the harbor, your nostrils begin to twitch. Tomato, saffron, onion, olive oil, pimento, plus a hundred other delectable ingredients stewing on every stove in the city, merge into a special piquance. It's a smell that will forever after bring back to you the mouth-watering memory of Havana. Now is the time to cut loose from those Anglo-Saxon inhibitions, to forget those waistline worries. Treat yourself to an orgy of good food. Sample all the native dishes at all the restaurants. In no other way can you have so much fun in Havana.

There's really no mystery about Cuban cooking.

Contrary to general belief, it isn't related to Mexican food except insofar as both lands were originally settled by Spaniards who brought along the recipes of Castile, Aragon, Catalonia and other provinces. These, then, form the base for most Cuban dishes; some prepared as they were originally, others modified because of the climate, still others contrived from the products of the island. Peppers and spices are used so subtly that you never burn your tongue on Cuban food as you might on Mexican.

*Note to worriers:* Actually, Cuban food is fresher than most American food. Fish and shellfish are caught and marketed on the same day. Vegetables and fruits are sold in the market or from carts the day they are picked. A familiar sight in the streets of Vedado is the Chinese vegetable vendor with a long pole slung over his shoulders, balancing two tremendous baskets of produce which he picked on his own truck farm at four that morning. Beef, while cut differently from the American style, is fresher, since Cubans do not hang their meat as long as we do. By law, all butcher shops must be hosed out daily, and the health department is scrupulous in its weekly inspection. There are fewer cuts of meat, but the filets and club steaks are comparable to those served in our best restaurants, and are less expensive. Chickens and eggs come fresh to the market daily, and dairy products are produced under modern, sanitary conditions.

*Don't worry about the water!* Remember that

600,000 Cubans drink it daily and thrive. There may be a slightly different taste, due to the high calcium content, but water from various sections of the U.S.A. varies similarly. Havana's water system is as carefully supervised as any in the States and has been ever since 1900, when Major Gorgas cleaned house for Cuba.

*Warning to die-hards:* Don't expect to find good American cooking in Havana. Don't wail for waffles and don't bemoan the lack of corned beef and cabbage. That's not what you came for. As a matter of fact, the only mediocre food in the city is the pseudo-American cuisine offered in hotels catering to tourists. The Cuban version of American coffee, for instance, is a nightmare, but go native with *café con leche* (half Cuban coffee and half hot milk, with sugar added to taste, and a dash of salt) or *café solo* (strong black Cuban coffee with lots of sugar) and you have the perfect ending for any meal. *Café* is Havana's life blood, and business transactions usually begin and/or end over the thimble-sized cups. Some humble refreshment stands charge as little as one penny a cup. All over town you will find ambulant coffee sellers. They trot right along beside you, balancing handy contraptions of wooden trays that hold thermos bottles filled with syrupy black coffee, cups and saucers, silver. You can practically drink as you run, if you are in a hurry!

Remember that price is not the criterion of quality for Cuban food. Restaurants like La Zaragozana

or the Paris—which has an *haute cuisine* worthy of its namesake—definitely are not cheap. There are, however, countless moderately priced restaurants serving infinitely better food than any to be found in similar establishments in America.

Even at the lowliest *fonda*, white tablecloths and a vase of roses on every table are a pleasant contrast to the eat-and-run appearance of our one-arm lunch counters. Specialties always will be cooked to individual order. This entails a twenty-minute wait but the results are certainly worthwhile. Besides, in Havana, time never is important. You give your order, relax and enjoy in anticipation the *plat* presently to be set before you. You will find also that service everywhere is considerably superior, that the waiters glow when you enjoy a dish, take infinite pains to please you and look upon serving as a life work.

To us, the *reservados* are the most entertaining feature of native restaurants. We love the Toulouse-Lautrec atmosphere these rows of private dining rooms lend. Often they open discreetly right onto the sidewalk, so that a rendezvous can be entirely private. No one can see guests come in; stained-glass panels shield them from curious passers-by. There are even old-fashioned buzzer call boxes, where the number of the summoning room pops up to signal the waiter. And the waiters are gravely co-operative as they sidle in and out of the narrowly opened door to serve the hidden guests who can leave as they came, quite incognito. One old res-

taurant, The Toledo, when redoing its interior, went completely Hollywood in the decoration of its *reservados*. Fanciful street names label the corridor you walk to reach the private booths. These resemble little Spanish houses of stucco, realistic to the last detail of mahogany bars at the windows and potted vines hanging from the sills. *Reservados* hark back to the drinking-champagne-out-of-satin-slippers era. It's amusing to find them in use today.

You will never have a better meal than the one you sit down to with a Cuban as host. Cubans are born gourmets, deriving as much satisfaction from a perfectly cooked dinner as from seeing their number come up in the weekly lottery. Should you be lucky enough to have Cuban friends, by all means let them guide you through the mazes of your first meals in Havana. However, if you're on your own, here are a few hints:

Eat as the natives do, and start the day with a light breakfast of *café con leche* and toasted French bread or rolls. There are endless varieties of bread but the kind that you will eat and eat and eat is called *Pan de flauta*; it comes in yard-long loaves and has a banana leaf pressed down the side. You, probably, will precede this with a huge tumbler of icy, fresh grapefruit or pineapple juice, or a sweet, ripe orange peeled and served whole on a fork. If you must have eggs, try them *al plato*, that is, broken into a casserole and baked in the oven until the whites are set. Really to savor the life of the city, don't confine yourself to breakfasting at your hotel,



but free-lance at the nearest *lechería* (dairy) or café. Every one—and their number is legion—serves appetizing, inexpensive food, and it is pleasant to watch the busy street as you linger over your coffee. Your breakfast, believe it or not, can cost as little as a dime, including fruit juice, coffee and rolls with butter.

Prepare for a substantial luncheon. At noontime everything closes down except the restaurants, and many businessmen go home for lunch and *siesta*. Since you can't shop or transact business from twelve to two, you might as well eat, and eat well. Whether you succumb to *arroz con pollo* (a Cuban standby—chicken with saffroned rice, peas and pimientos *en casserole*, good at the Cosmopolita) or one of the myriad seafood dishes, the main course will be preceded by fruit-cup or soup and followed by salad and dessert. *Café solo* finishes the meal, of course.

Sometimes, in the afternoon between four and five, you may have *merienda*—a little snack—perhaps a Cuban sandwich or *bocadito* which translates charmingly as “little mouthful.” Cuban ham, with a meatier ham flavor than ours, is the standby for these, and it's a treat to get a sandwich with the ham thicker than the surrounding bread. Accompany this with *chocolate*, beaten to an indescribably rich and creamy thickness and no more like our own than milk is like water.

If you skip *merienda* you'll want cocktails. Cocktail time is from six to nine and besides drinking

*Daiquiris* (the best in the world are served at the Floridita) or *Presidentes*, you'll eat *berberechos* (wonderful clams no bigger than your finger-tip, imported from Spain) little seafood croquettes, banana chips (tangier than potato chips) and olives spiked with garlic.

Dinner is late and large, starting any time after eight with formal dinner parties continuing until past midnight. Wines accompany each course. Some of the older restaurants in the city treat their patrons to a liqueur at the end of the meal as a toast on the house. For the perfect finale to the perfect dinner, drop into the Floridita to enjoy a *Café Cocktail*—black coffee, Spanish brandy, Crème de Cacao and a shaving of lemon peel, all whipped vigorously in an electric mixer until it becomes a subtle blend of flavors.

During evening-long drinking it is sometimes startling to find Cubans concentrating on *high-bolitos* (Scotch and soda to you). This is just another result of the American invasion. You, however, might like to try the native drink of *mojito*, which translates as "something a little wet." Quartered limes, bottles of Bacardi rum and charged water, powdered sugar and a bunch of mint are brought to the table. Then, all through the night you make your own *mojitos* while everyone looks on approvingly and marks you as an *Americano* who knows what's what. Cuban beer is plentiful, cheap and good; you can find the Cuban version of any type you like at home.

To get down to fundamentals, here are dishes not to be missed: "Soup, soup, beautiful soup" might well be sung of *Caldo gallego*, a Spanish potage thick with sausage, ham, cabbage, potatoes and other vegetables. It's hearty, so take it sparingly. The Petit Miami is justly proud of its version of this dish. Another specialty is *Sopa tartara*, chicken broth with bread, crowned with an egg poached in the soup. Don't neglect *Fabada*, a celebrated Spanish dish. Every kind of bean worthy of social recognition figures in this wonderful potage, sharpened with pieces of sausage, Gallegan ham and crisp bacon, which are fished out of the soup and served separately. Go to Castillo de Farnes for this one-dish meal, as it is known as the center for Asturian cooking. On a par with *arroz con pollo* as a Cuban staple is *Ajiaco*, found at every restaurant. The yellow vegetable broth, really almost a stew, is made with rounds of corn, pieces of *yuca*, *malanga* (elephant ear), even banana. There may or may not be meat included. If you plan to follow this with a whole meal, take only a small portion—it's filling.

Havana is the Mecca for seafood fans. There is *langosta*, giant crawfish, so meaty that it can be served in thick slices, like beef. The *langosta* carries all its meat on its back, which is why the Cubans refer to a lady with a definite *derrière* as a *Langostina*! You will find it less flaky than our lobster, but soul-satisfying because there's so much more of it.

Mammoth Moorish crabs (*Cangrejo Moro*) have the claws that the lobsters lack. Fabulous in size, their meat is sweet and satisfying.

Choose what you will—red-snapper, pompano, squid, shrimp—all are amazingly succulent. Have your seafood cold, with mayonnaise or combined with spicy sauces (*enchilada*, which is quite hot, or *Catalan*, a subtler concoction). Any way you eat it, superb is the word. Economy note: Woolworth's, across the street from El Encanto, serves quite a good *langosta enchilada* for twenty cents.

Cuban oysters are tiny, with a salty, pungent flavor. Try them at the street stalls where they are opened as you eat, *sans* any garnish but a squirt of lime juice. You'll have mountains of empty shells. At restaurants, Cubans like to accompany their oysters with a small glass of *Manzanilla*, a dry sherry which they claim brings out the full flavor of the bivalve.

*Paella* is the high C of Cuban cooking, an old Spanish custom you will take to enthusiastically. It is seafood combined with a base of browned chicken, pork, saffroned rice, peas and peppers. Order it about an hour in advance of mealtime to enjoy this masterpiece at its luscious best. In comes a proud waiter reverently carrying a huge casserole, the top brilliant with strips of pimento, artichoke hearts, asparagus and sprinkled egg-yolk. You dig in and discover an assortment of chicken, lobster, crab, shrimp, mussels and tiny clams. *Sabrosísimo!* Go to La Marina for your *paella*, please, an unpre-

tentious *fonda* known to all Havana's food fanciers for a special talent with this dish.

Down by the waterfront, La Victoria, a pleasant family restaurant where the patrons play dominoes far into the night, makes a point of its *arroz con mariscos*. This is a blander, moister concoction of rice with seafood, including squid and octopus, without saffron and less pungent than *paella*. It is worth sampling.

Around the corner from the Templete is the Templete Restaurant. Here one sits looking out at the busy harbor, waiting for red-snapper steaks. By and large, red-snapper is the fish that gets around most in Havana, often masquerading as flounder or sole. Since red-snapper is what you usually get, red-snapper is what you might as well order. But whether it is the large variety served as steaks or stuffed, or the tiny triangular kind used for fish in paper, *pargo* is the *pièce de résistance* there. Try *rueda de pargo* at the Templete, solid slices of the delicate fish broiled with a dash of olive-oil on top, garnished with chopped chives, parsley and a few peas. Good eating. Red-snapper steaks breaded like veal cutlets are something else to make you lick your chops. You will like this dish at the pleasant patio of the Swiss Home Restaurant, where meals are served tranquilly, to waltz-time by a string quartet. Pompano, in the de-luxe class at home, is another everyday item on Havana menus, and turtle steak, cut from the giant deep-sea turtles, is not uncommon. We found it disappointing, though. Tur-

tle meat is a lot like beefsteak, only not so good. If you want to experiment, try it at La Zaragozana.

*Rancho de mariscos* rewards you with an assorted seafood grill, including red-snapper roe and tiny crawfish crisp in crumb batter. Try this at the Palacio de Cristal. Have you a shad-roë fixation? Then red-snapper roe will be a treat. The flavor is a bit more subtle, the roe a bit smaller. Now, for once, you can gobble roe to satiation point. Have it broiled, or, perhaps even better, in little fritters dipped in egg and cracker crumbs. Almost every restaurant offers this elegant entrée as a matter of course, sometimes for as little as thirty cents.

*Pescado papillote* is one of the main reasons why you should visit the Miami, long known for fine food. Tiny, boned red-snappers, with a heavenly egg sauce, are oven-baked, neatly packaged in brown paper. There is another good way of doing fish in paper with a sauce of tomatoes and onions, too.

*Bacalao* or dried codfish is one of Havana's first foods, stressed in the days when the menu was more restricted and fresh food scarce. It is quite salty, but try a taste of *Bacalao Vizcaína* before your main course, as an appetite-teaser. Codfish is cooked in innumerable ways, one for every Spanish province. *Vizcaína* style, it is flaky and pungent in a tantalizing sauce of tomatoes and spices. La Isla does right by the dish.

Other good spots for seafood are the Cosmopolita

and Palacio de Cristal, but the most famous restaurant in Havana for anything ocean-bred is La Zaragozana, established in 1830, and better today than ever. Anything you order here will be exceptional, especially the *langosta* and crab.

So much for seafood. If a steak is your supreme moment, make a beeline for La Maravilla, a small *fonda* opposite El Cristo Church, that prides itself on serving the best beef in Havana. Your steak, a really wonderful cut, thick but soft as butter, like the eye of our porterhouse, will be cooked to order as you prefer. This paragon among steaks will stand you exactly thirty cents! El Patio on the Prado and The Paris in Cathedral Square, while considerably more expensive, also serve beautiful steaks. Try Beef Châteaubriand at The Paris.

Jerk beef, or *tasajo*, is another of the mainstays of the Cuban diet, but there is more than a chance you won't take to its salty flavor. It is served braised, with rice, or in sauces. What you will unquestionably enjoy is the Spanish ham, so much meatier and more flavor-filled than ours, and Spanish sausage, spicy *chorizos* or *salchichas*. Both are served as *hors d'oeuvres* with a bit of tomato essence on top, at El Baturro, an interesting Spanish wine-cellar. Here barrels of wine are piled against the wall and you pick your vintage from sixty varieties. You'll like the slightly gloomy air of the place. There's no attempt to divert the customers with interior decorating or a *marimba* band. Nothing but food and

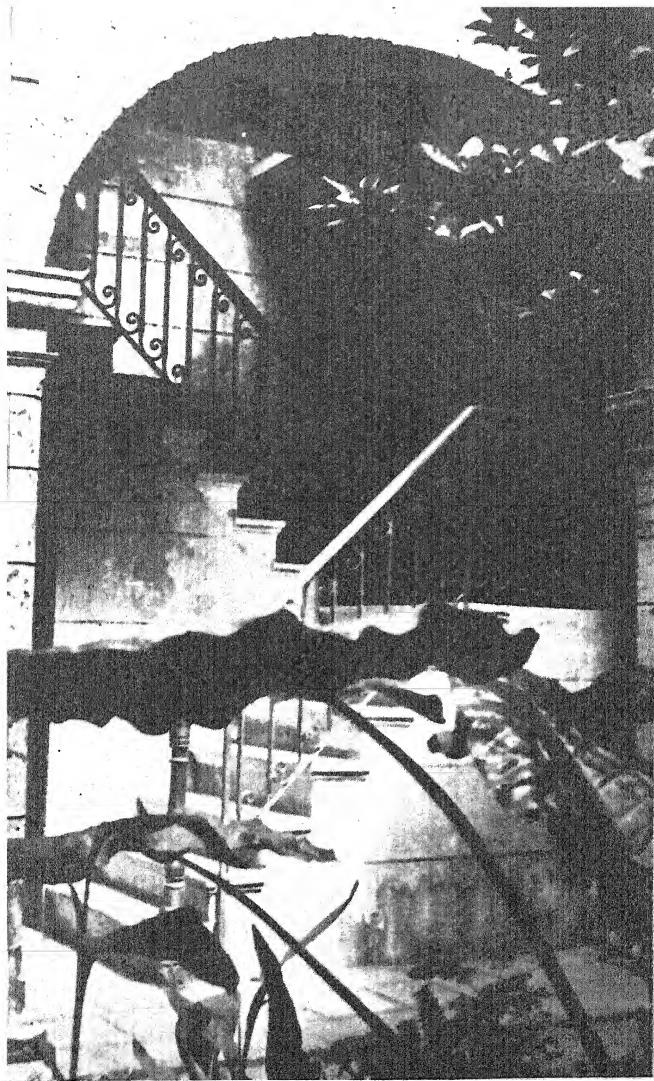
wine. Another unusual appetite-teaser is *mejillones*, Spanish mussels with a savory sauce, a specialty at El Baturro and hard to find elsewhere.

Calves' brains cooked in the Cuban style are a delicacy not to be missed. They are fresh, inexpensive and available everywhere. La Isla, famous for good food as well as the most extensive line-up of *reservados* in town (Cubans whisper that this is where the tired businessman comes to relax), serves *sesos grillet*, thinly sliced and delectably browned to melt in your mouth. Or you might try them in little fritter poufs. The Cosmopolita does brains *au gratin* superbly, deliciously drowned in a rich cream sauce that makes one long for a double portion. La Cosmopolita, next to the old Inglaterra Hotel, is one of the notable eating establishments in Havana, fairly high in price. The place is small with formal Old World atmosphere, reflected in the elegant attitude of the waiters as they proudly whisk off the *cloche* from an inimitable dish. Though the service is somnolent, the uncrowded atmosphere is relaxing. A dinner here is not merely savory but celebrated.

Cuban lamb is thicker in grain than ours and not as delicate in flavor. It appears on every menu in many different guises. You will enjoy it *en brochette*, nice thick chunks skewered and broiled. It is worth trying at Palacio de Cristal.

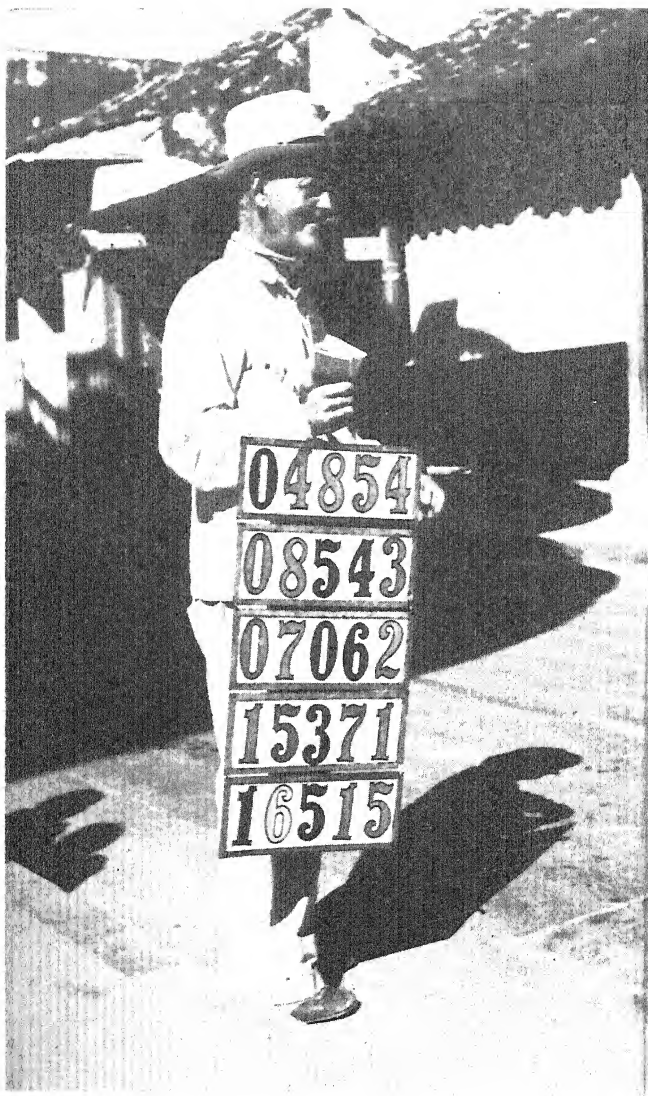
Pig's feet or *pata* is still another gustatory experience. Even if you have avoided them at home, you will relish them here, where they are fresh, meaty





FRANCESCO ENRIQUEZ

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY PATIO, NOW THE ENTRANCE  
TO A BAR



CUBAN TOURIST COMMISSION

LOTTERY TICKET PEDDLER

and delicious. When sliced and served cold you are fooled into thinking of chicken or turkey. This is the meat which figures importantly in a famous dish, *Patas a la Andaluza*. Every Thursday and Sunday, when restaurants feature it, the men of Havana make a concerted lunchtime rush for their *Patas a la Andaluza*. Then, for the rest of the week, they roll their eyes in delight and reminisce about how good it was. The recipe involves pig's feet, *garbanzos* or Spanish beans, sausage, ham, tomatoes and onion, all glorified into an Olympian stew. La Victoria, La Viña (a tiny truly Spanish *fonda*) or La Idea are good places for this delicacy.

It is pork, of course, which is the staff of life to Cubans. Pork is omnipresent, flavoring many dishes. Roasted whole suckling pig, *lechón asado*, is always a main attraction at holiday feasts. You will see it sold on the streets everywhere during Saints' Day celebrations and carnival time. Taste it, but don't indulge to excess; it's a bit heavy for warm-weather eating.

Hash in any language can be sublime or ridiculous. When you get a good *criolla* hash, called *pica-dillo* (chopped up), you have made a discovery! It is eaten with rice, crowned with a fried egg on top. The meat is well browned and the chef may indulge his fancy and add something colorful like stuffed olives.

Besides chicken, guinea hen is plentiful, usually served roasted. There is a special party version, *estofada* or stuffed, with olives, raisins and bread-

crumbs. We had this at a private home, but ask for it, and perhaps a restaurant can oblige. *Palomita* or wild dove is also a staple dish on Havana menus.

Probably one of the *conquistadores* who had had a Mexican interlude demanded his *tamale* in Havana. But however it got into the Cuban culinary scheme, *tamale* is a worthwhile dish to sample. Fresh corn is ground by hand and pounded in a pestle. Then bits of seasoned beef, pork, onion and tomato are added, and the whole mass steamed in a big casserole. There are plain versions of *tamale* and sometimes it is made with only regular store-bought corn meal. Have yours made from the fresh corn; that is, make sure, before ordering, for it is the fresh corn that lends the incomparable flavor. We liked the *tamale en casuela* served at the rooftop restaurant of the Ambos Mundos Hotel.

They have innumerable tricks with eggs in Mañanaland. Because the chickens are fed mainly on corn, you will find the eggs and the dishes involving eggs a vivid golden color. Don't be unduly alarmed, like the unfortunate American who couldn't bear scrambled eggs in Havana because (he said) they had yellow fever!

*Huevos al nido*, which means eggs-on-the-nest, are a long-time *chef-d'oeuvre* of the Ambos Mundos Restaurant across the street from the hotel. Try them and you will agree that this one dish could make the fame and fortune of any American restaurant. With a flourish, the beaming waiter presents a large round nest of potatoes Julienne, beau-

tifully crisp and firm on the outside, soft and succulent within, standing proudly on a platform of toast. Inside the nest you find a tantalizing blend of diced chicken livers, truffles, mushrooms, topped with shirred eggs, and the whole bound together with a fine wine sauce. The dish takes at least twenty-five minutes to prepare; so it's well to order it in advance.

Spain contributes several methods of cooking eggs, one of the most popular being *huevos Malagueña*, extra good at the Petit Miami. Shirred eggs, in a little ramekin, blanket an assortment of shrimps, peas, asparagus, Cuban sausage and diced ham. Colorful and good. *Pisto Manchego* is an exciting-looking affair, really a glorified scramble that would raise the status of a one-dish Sunday-night supper to that of a banquet. And, practical note, a wonderful ice-box-cleaner-outer. Melting bits of sautéed brains, shrimp, browned potatoes, onion and pepper are tossed together with the eggs, and the final result is as beautiful to taste as to behold. We found our favorite *pisto* at El Templete, but it is on every menu.

Cubans like omelets, called *tortillas*, and aren't at all inhibited about what they add, trying peas, chopped potatoes, alligator pears or seafood. We had a nice banana omelet for all of fifteen cents at Flor de Consulado, a little and inexpensive Chinese restaurant. Whatever you do, don't miss a fruit *tortilla con ron* at the Miami. Filled with fresh fruits and served in a flaming rum-bath, this is the

quintessence of epicurean eating. It is a perfect dessert after a fairly light meal.

Vegetables are regarded as salads, often cooked and served with a light dressing of oil and vinegar. Green peppers especially are good this way. Have them with your steak at La Maravilla. Fried plantains, sliced and crisped to a deep orange, are the national standby, so much so that when you really go native, the Cubans call you *aplatanado* or banana-ed! Be sure to ask for your bananas *maduro*, or ripe, however. *Platanos fritos verdes* (fried green bananas) are too mealy for American taste, though popular here. Country people often use them as a substitute for bread.

Today tomatoes, carrots, lettuce, string beans and other American vegetables are plentiful; in fact, quantities are shipped to the States. In past times, the root vegetables such as *yuca* and *malanga* were most important. Both of these are starchy and fairly heavy; so we don't urge you to indulge, but *yuca* has a pleasant flavor and you might try it instead of potatoes. We offer praise, however, for *chayote*, the Cuban squash. Much subtler in flavor than our summer squash, it is also lighter in color, almost white. You will like *chayote* as a vegetable, and we even had it for dessert, the halves stuffed with puréed squash, raisins, breadcrumbs, sugar and nutmeg, then topped with sliced almonds and browned in the oven. Watercress is an important ingredient in the Cuban's salad. It seems to have much more taste than ours, and we devoured it in enormous

bunches, drowned in oil. *Berros* is what you ask for, and out in the country, you see it flourishing luxuriantly in the placid little streams.

A four-star special is alligator pear served with only oil and vinegar to bring out its soft flavor. Ripened as you rarely find them in the States, they are perfect as an *hors d'oeuvre* or salad.

Above all else, be sure to sample black beans and rice, particularly good at lovely Rio Cristal, El Patio or El Templete. The beans are cooked like a potage, and after mixing them with the rice and the accompanying chopped onion, oil and vinegar are added. Does it seem strange? Try *arroz con frijoles* and see.

You will get not "just desserts" in Havana, but sweets that make ours seem dull and ordinary. For instance, *flan*, or Cuban custard, spoils you forever after for the anemic American version. It is thick, rich, yellow, topped with caramelized sugar and swimming in burnt-sugar sauce. Try *flan* at its best at the Floridita or the Miami and you will become an addict.

Diplomat pudding is a new angle on *flan*; the same custard is served on a base of plain cake, topped with whole guava fruit in syrup. *Flan* figures in another tempting dessert, Cup Lolita, a combination of ice-cream, the custard and fruit sauce. It is on all menus; we have even had it at a little *lechería* for ten cents. The third incarnation of Cuban custard has an appealing name, "bacon-from-Heaven," *tocino del cielo*, for it is sliced like

bacon, from a long "side." Since this is extremely rich, quite like a paste, a small portion will suffice. La Zaragozana is the place to get it.

Cubans like *sabayon*, the French edition of *zabaglione*, that wonderful concoction of egg-yolks, sugar and sherry. Order it at The Paris and don't be surprised to find yourself coming back for more. It is food fit for the gods.

You will enjoy the incomparable Cuban pineapple, sliced fresh and covered with cocoanut conserve. The pineapple here is sweeter and mellower than the variety sent to the States, but, unfortunately, it does not stand shipping; so eat all you can while you can.

When ice-cream is the idea, there are a hundred different kinds to try, but the best is *coco glacé*, picturesquely served in halved natural cocoanut shells. *Tortoni*, too, is a specialty, and if you have confined your dunking to doughnuts and coffee, you will enjoy dunking in *tortoni*, a flaky ice-cream served in squares, attended by little cornucopias of thin pastry, called *barquillas*, which you use as scoops. Try a *tortoni* at the Parque Central.

Native cheeses with guava jelly or paste are regulation but worth tasting, as are native fruits, usually too sweet and pulpy for American taste, but an aesthetic experience, if only for the color schemes. There's *mamey*, cocoa-brown outside, flame-colored inside, with a great oval brown, polished stone that can double as a paperweight. There are *mangos*, running with juice, best eaten in a bathing suit,



tiny tart *mamonsillos* that you suck all day, saccharine *chirimoya* and purple-fleshed *zapote*, as well as million-seeded *anón*. But the king of Cuban fruits is the banana in infinite variety, including the little *manzano* with an apple flavor and the tiny *ciento en boca*, a hundred in a mouthful, so called because you eat them in bunches. Many Americans already know the *papaya* melon, a bit too bland to tickle our palates. If, however, you want to try it in Cuba, be sure to ask for *fruta bomba*, as the word *papaya* is not used in polite society down here!

IN-BETWEEN-TIME IDEAS FOR YOUR APPETITE:  
*Pierna* sandwiches—pig's leg, sliced thin and sandwiched with slices of sharp, tart pickle. These are fun to have at the market around three or four in the morning when the place bustles with produce merchants and the roosters and turkeys call to their mates. The nicest sandwich of all, however, is the famous *media noche* or midnight, named for the time it was originally served. You get what starts out as an oval, yellow, semi-sweet bun, which goes on to fill itself generously with wafer-thin slices of Spanish sausage, turkey or chicken, *pierna*, sharp pickle, ham and cheese. Then *you* go on to finish at least two or three.

Don't look down your nose at the street vendors if you're seized by pangs of hunger while shopping. Besides the oysters, you can get wonderful *tamales*, little round hamburgers called *fritas*, fried shrimps and hot fish croquettes. Piping hot, long, crunchy

cruller sticks will be offered to you from a tin basket. They are called *churros* and are appropriate with hot *chocolate*. Little rounds of puff pastry, dusted with sugar, are sold in paper twists and you get about ten for a nickel. They're Spanish doughnuts, and the name is *rosquillas*.

French-pastry fiends will succumb to the wine-soaked tidbits, the custard concoctions, the fluffy meringues, all extremely decorative and colorful. The best in the city are at La Lucerna, a super-super pastry shop on Neptuno Street. There are *cangrejitos* (little crabs), wonderful pastry poufs filled with creamed crabmeat, cheese or minced ham. During Holy Week, La Lucerna sells fish-shaped tidbits of pastry filled with fish *au gratin*. In the afternoons, when Cuban ladies finish their shopping, they stop at Lucerna to choose the pastry for that evening's dinner. Few can resist the temptation of the refreshment stand at the rear of the store and settle down with two or three luscious samples of their purchases, accompanied by a cup of *chocolate Español*. It is probably Lucerna's fault that so many of Havana's *señoras* run to embonpoint!

Try sesame-seed candy at two cents a bar, from the street vendors, or the suckers sold from a tall pole that looks like a strange tree blossoming with lollypops. There's *turrón*, too, that confection imported from Spain, of almond paste and nuts.

When you are sun-dazzled and hot, drop in at the Floridita for a *champola* of *guanábana* fruit, a

long drink of sweet fruit pulp whipped up with milk, ice-cream and shaved ice—a happy cross between a soda and a milk-punch. The unstrained pineapple refreshment here also is a joy—*piña sin colar*—crushed fruit in a tall glass with its own juice and shaved ice poured over all. At the Floridita, too, you can drink your watermelon. Crushed melon pulp and rosy liquid are served frosted. Wonderful, if only they could eliminate the pits!

Huge glasses of *piña colada*—clear and strained pineapple juice, also the juices of ripe grapefruit, oranges, tamarinds, and countless others—are the best five cents' worth you ever bought at any sidewalk stand. When you are in an experimental mood, sample some of the twenty-three varieties of native fruit juices served at El Camaguey, a *frutería* on Calle Galiano.

IMPORTANT ETCETERAS: Menus at the larger restaurants usually are written in English as well as Spanish, and often at least one waiter in each place serves as tourist-trade interpreter.

The accepted manner of calling a waiter is to hiss imperatively, but you can also attract his attention by making a loud kissing sound.

Most of the restaurants charge for bread and butter.

Be prepared to receive lime, inevitably, when you ask for lemon. The latter is considered "American lime" and is none too easy to get. Lime, incidentally, is the important finishing touch on Cuban

dishes. Seafood or steak always arrives flanked by quartered limes that point up the flavor. Bitter orange, too, is used in the same way.

Don't be surprised if Cuban hosts check and double-check the check. Bred in the European tradition, they have no hesitancy about protesting questionable charges, where Americans might refrain, for fear of a scene.

Always pay your bill to the waiter.

The safest rule to follow about tipping is old, reliable, ten-percent of check. Don't make the mistake of over-tipping, and hand your tip to the waiter, rather than leaving it on the table.

Many of the restaurants are almost *al fresco*, open on two sides, so that you can see everything happening in the streets and so that, alas, you are all too exposed to lottery vendors, shoe-shine boys and beggars. The word to use is *Váyase* (go away), and if you add *viejo* (old man) they'll think you're a native and give up.

*Final reassurance:* Aside from purely sensual pleasure, eating your way through Havana can be regarded as a safety-valve, infinitely preferable, say, to drinking or gambling your way along. Also, the ability to talk authoritatively about the secrets of Cuban cooking may well make you the lion at local dinner parties back home. So desert your diet until *mañana*, and have fun with food, as we did. Every night, thanks to our self-appointed uncle, there would be a new dish to sample and exclaim over.

Uncle is the man who meets more Americans than the Tourist Commission. Not a boat docks without disembarking at least one passenger who clutches a bit of paper bearing this *señor's* name and address. He loves to show people his Havana, dotes on discovering novel pastimes and, gleeful gourmet that he is, somehow finds time to ferret out exciting new eating places. It seems only fair, at this point, to bless him for his solicitude in the interest of our all-American appetites.

Of course, we tried to be virtuous about it. Pan-American Airways has a convenient free scale, in their office on the Prado. We dashed there from the Sevilla-Biltmore every morning before breakfast, to weigh in. You can, too!

## RECOMMENDED RESTAURANTS

AMBOS MUNDOS. Calles Obispo and Mercaderes in the old section of town. *Huevos al nido* and *filet mignon* are specialties. Medium-priced.

EL BATURRO. Egidio 661. Nice old Spanish wine tavern with a painting of a shepherd over the bar. Be sure to have *hors d'oeuvres*. Inexpensive.

EL CAMAGUEY. Galiano 219. *Frutería* where twenty-three varieties of native fruit juices can be sampled. Their ice-cream is good, too. Cheap.

CASTILLO DE FARNÉS. Obrapia 562. Specializes in dishes from Asturias province. Eat *fabada* there. Medium-priced.

COSMOPOLITA. Prado 412. One of the oldest and best known for good food. Go for *arroz con pollo*. On the expensive side.

FLOR DE CONSULADO. Consulado 260. Decent food at infinitesimal prices.

FLORIDITA. Calles Obispo and Monserrate. Fine restaurant where Cuban café society meets at the bar from noontime on. Cradle of the *Daiquiri*. Uniformly good food. Medium-priced.

FRASCATI. Prado 357. One flight up. A small place for Italian food, though why should you want it? Moderate in price.

HOLLYWOOD. Neptuno 419. Bright corner restaurant, extremely modern with metal tubing and fabricoid-upholstered furniture. Cheap Chinese or Cuban food, and not bad.

LA IDEA. Padre Varela 208. Unimpressive but

good for Spanish dishes. Excellent *langosta enchilada*. In the lower brackets.

LA ISLA. Calles Galiano and San Rafael. Block-long restaurant with fine French cuisine. Notable for the *reservados* with back entrance on Calle Rayo. Medium-priced.

LA MARAVILLA. Villegas 87, corner Calle Amargura. This is the *fonda* where you get the best steak in Cuba. Cheap.

LA MARINA. Oficios 202. An unassuming *boîte* serving the best *paella* in Havana. Order this in advance and don't fail to express your enjoyment, as part of the ritual. Cheap.

MIAMI. Prado 362. Long famous for excellent food and much loved by Americans. Superb egg dishes. Don't miss their *flan* or *tortilla con ron*. Expensive.

PALACIO DE CRISTAL. Calles Consulado and San José, just back of the *Centro Gallego*. Good for *rancho de mariscos* and lamb *en brochette*. Expensive.

PARIS. San Ignacio 54, in Cathedral Square. Housed in a magnificent old palace, it is considered by experts the best restaurant in the city. Superb French cuisine, excellent wine cellar. *Beef Châteaubriand* and *sabayon* are recommended. Expensive.

EL PATIO. Prado at Genios. Charming garden restaurant in a beautiful old mansion. Excellent seafood and steaks. Smart and expensive.

PETTIT MIAMI. Calles Bernaza and O'Reilly. Pleas-

ant restaurant offering among other things a bewildering variety of *helados* (ices) and *cremas* (ice-creams) made from native fruits. Moderate in price.

PRADO 86. The patio of Havana's outstanding liquor shop. Plants and caged canaries make it a pleasant retreat for cocktails or lunch. A limited menu at moderate prices.

LA REGULADORA. Amistad 412. Crowded at noon with tobacco merchants who know good food. Medium-priced.

RIO CRISTAL. Twenty minutes from the city, via bus route 76. A one-time nunnery surrounded by picturesque gardens. Not to be missed for luncheon or tea. The black beans and rice are famous as is their variation on *arroz con pollo*—made with champagne. Expensive.

SWISS HOME RESTAURANT. Acosta 215. A pleasant patio in old Havana. Believe it or not, Hungarian cooking. Inexpensive and good.

EL TEMPLETE. Calles San Pedro and Enna. A Cuban rendezvous for seafood, little known to tourists. Highly recommended. Cheap.

LA VICTORIA. Calles Oficios and Luz, facing the waterfront. Middle-class restaurant-café noted for *arroz con mariscos*. Cheap.

LA VIÑA. Aguila 183, across from the Lottery Market. Nondescript at first glance, but the food, especially the Spanish dishes, is grand. *Patas a la Andaluza* recommended. Cheap.

ZARAGOZANA. 355 Monserrate. Fitting climax for



any list of restaurants. Fine food has been a tradition here for more than a century. Seafood a specialty but anything on the menu will be superb. In the upper brackets.



## *Dawn's Early Light*

"ARE you having a good time?"

"Have you been doing the town?"

"Who's taking you around?"

These are the questions the Cubans you meet will ask, hoping for a flood of enthusiasm in reply. They want to feel that you are having the time of your life, that you have seen all the bright spots, done all the night clubs, gone to all the gay places. If you feel the third question a little personal, just analyze the tone in which it is spoken, which has the flattering implication that if you were *not* taken care of, the questioner would be at your beck and call every minute. Clever Cubans!

Even the personnel of your hotel will have a proprietary interest in your good times; you would think they had launched you! As you descend from your room the elevator operator is likely to ask, "*Vas*



CUBAN TOURIST COMMISSION  
AN OPEN-AIR MARKET IN THE RESIDENTIAL SECTION  
OF HAVANA



ROBERTO MACHADO

LA FUERZA, FORTRESS BUILT BY DE SOTO

*a echar un pie?*" which translates picturesquely as "Do you go throwing a foot?" and is Cuban slang for making whoopie. The desk clerk beams as you turn in your room key, especially if you tell him you don't know when you'll return, but it will probably be late. Don't, as a matter of fact, worry about seeing raised eyebrows when you roll in by the dawn's early light. The only time the hotel worries is when you go to bed early, which means (to them) that you're not having fun and therefore may not return the following season!

Before you go *paseando*, here are a few suggestions:

Under no circumstances should a woman appear by herself either on the streets or in public places after the early part of the evening. No dashing to the corner for a *piña* at midnight, please. It just isn't done. Though American women do have a certain amount of leeway, as tourists, and are not judged by the standards set for their Cuban sisters, a woman on her own still rates raised eyebrows. Since it is recognized that American women enjoy much more freedom than Cuban, you won't be looked at askance when you go out with another girl or with several. For instance, it is certainly permissible to visit places like Sans Souci without an escort, though we don't think you would have much fun. However, this sort of thing should not be indulged in indiscriminately. A leading American magazine for young women recently stated, in an article on Havana, that it was permissible for young-

lady tourists to strike up chance acquaintanceships at night clubs and pursue such friendships; that in this way one met worthwhile natives. We almost came to blows, discussing the article with a Cuban who insisted he agreed with the magazine. But the answer is this: A few nights later, at precisely the cabaret cited by the article, a prepossessing young Cuban approached our table to ask for a dance. The glare he got from our one man (who had theoretically approved this practice) sent him scurrying. A little later, while one of us was alone at the table, a suave-looking individual approached in his turn, and was refused. In the dim light of the club, it would have been hard for most people to detect that he was a half-caste, and we're sure that the average American woman could never have spotted it. That's why we say: be extremely discriminating, please. We don't believe for a moment that most tourists, men or women, know enough about Cubans to decide whether the pick-up—let's call a spade a spade—is in their own class.

Investigate cab charges before putting your evening into the hands of a guide-car chauffeur who naturally receives commissions from the places to which he brings customers. At a fixed rate of twenty cents per zone, using taxis may save you money.

At the risk of sounding like your Great-Aunt Tabitha, we want to stress this rule: *When you are in Havana, act as you would at home.* Prohibition brought great crowds of Americans to Cuba with

one fixed idea—a spree. While the big-binge tendency has diminished since repeal, plenty of people still work on the theory that they have to drink up the town or the trip is a failure. This too-common frame of mind can be illustrated by citing one offensive individual we know who gleefully boasts that it took three policemen to get him back on his boat. He considers the theft of a gun from one of the officers the climax of his entire trip. His official escorts remained gravely polite during the entire fracas, since far more latitude is permitted tourists than natives. Remember, however, there is still no excuse for abusing the country's hospitality. Cubans are fairly cynical about American conduct. They have seen too many misbehave. There is the almost automatic assumption that to be an American is to be rambunctious and rude. Your own courtesy and good taste will, therefore, be that much more appreciated. Don't drink more than you do at home. Don't get involved in brawls or situations. Don't have anything to do with people you ordinarily would leave severely alone. Gossip travels fast in Havana, and, particularly if you have friends in residence, it is unwise to get yourself talked about.

If you like night life, you'll like night life in Havana. Places seem gayer, more colorful. Cubans, always intense in their reactions, devote themselves wholeheartedly to the business of having fun. There is none of the frozen-faced, you've-got-to-show-me attitude all too common at American caba-

rets. Cubans dance the whole night through, sing joyously along with the orchestra, call greetings to friends, without a trace of self-consciousness. It all adds up to having a wonderful time and you find yourself joining in. Though entertainment at most of the clubs is pretty bad, the native dancers are marvelous, with more than average talent. Most of the poor acts you see are American, or due to the American influence, alas. One we saw that capped them all was the Cuban version of a Hawaiian dance—complete with cellophane skirts—and so funny it compensated for its lack of talent. When a dead-pan Cuban chorine tries to get hot, spare us! Currently, there's a plague of toe-dancers, all terrible. But the natives lap it up. When Cuban talent sticks to its last, though, that's another story. You'll tingle to the enthusiastic shout of "*olé!*" that goes up, watching the lusty *jota* or the sinuous *flamenco* dances, for Spain's traditions live on, and Spanish numbers are stressed in all the shows. Of course the native Cuban dancers are superb, far and away beyond anything you ever saw at home.

You will notice immediately the difference in the way the Cuban dances are performed. The old Cuban ballroom dance, perfect for the climate, is the *danzón*. A seductive box-step is done to music that starts slowly, then quickens, with certain melodic intervals between chorus and verse, when everybody stops to rest, and, in past years, the ladies fanned themselves while their partners murmured appropriate compliments. You may not recognize



the stops, but don't be surprised to see the Cubans pause four times during the dance.

The *son* is the modern version of the *danzón*, danced to faster music, with graceful breaks and intricate turns. This is the dance Americans incorrectly call the *rumba*, for the *rumba* is only an exhibition dance. Also incorrect is the manner in which most tourists do the *son*. The only time dancers cavort about in Cuba is when they are American. The Cuban style is extremely formal with that inimitable hip rotation which seems to be a formula all their own. To have your dancing called *suavecito*, smooth, is the highest compliment that can be paid. All movement is south of the border, with shoulders remaining immobile. The *golpes*, or side-steps, are the gentleman's prerogative; the lady follows but maintains an ivory-tower air.

The exhibition *rumba* originally was a marriage dance, and many of the steps which may seem lewd actually only represent common farm tasks, such as climbing a rope or shoeing a mare. When African slaves were first brought to Cuba the owners bred them like livestock; later when they were freed they made their own marriages at community feasts. Then the Negroes, with no knowledge of civilized forms of courtship, copied the antics of barnyard fowls, the pompous rooster pursuing the coquettish hen. Thus the man's ruffled shirt is symbolic of the cock's hackle feathers, and the woman's long ruffled train represents the hen's tail feathers. When

the man caught his partner face to face (*vacunar*, it's called), the rule was that he won her for his wife.

You will see the *conga* danced, too. If you learned it in the States, you are due for a surprise. The Cuban version is the authentic one, without kicking and with a pantherish glide, danced just as it was by the Negroes who originated it. The *conga* comes from slave times, too, and is named after the big *conga* drum, like a huge tom-tom. Legend says that shackled slaves danced to drums, advancing for three steps, then dropping their ankle-chains with a clang, which gave the accented fourth beat. Even the music of the *conga* is different down here. You have to recognize the difference between *son* and *conga* rhythm almost instinctively, for orchestras don't give you the cue with that heavy boom. If you're lucky enough to see the *conga* danced in the streets at Carnival time, you'll see *conga* dancing at its exciting best. All night long, Negro troupes from every part of the city dance it in *comparsas*, and then it is done with almost no movement at all, just the subtlest shoulder shimmy and an amazingly adept hip motion that defies imitation.

The tango is extremely popular on Cuban dance floors too, which is natural, since it has all the worldly grace of the *son*, intricately embellished. Many South Americans stop in Havana, en route to their own countries, and many *Habaneros* visit South America; that is why the tango dancing you see is so suave and expert.

Another dance the Cubans like is the *paso doble*, a Spanish two-step, and their interpretation is fast and furious. They go mad for American tunes and were really maniacal about the "Beer Barrel Polka," which they call *Barrilito*. From eight in the morning, when street organs started to grind away, to the last dance at any night club, *Barrilito* pursued us relentlessly. A *paso doble* danced to this tune is exhausting, even to watch. It always surprised us that the dancers had enough energy left to walk back to their tables, without collapsing completely.

Though their own smooth dances are so perfectly suited to the climate, Cubans adore the livelier novelties that come from the States. The Lambeth Walk, the Shag, the Big Apple—all were nine-day sensations. God help Cuba if anything more frenzied than the Lindy Hop is invented.

When you hear Cuban music, you will notice the *maracas*, now almost a symbol of the island. They are gourds with handles, like overgrown darning eggs, filled with seeds or pebbles, and are shaken in counterpoint to the other instruments. Then there is the double *bongó* drum, the one underneath which the drummer sometimes lights a fire to tighten the skin for more timbre. Two short, rosewood sticks, called *claves*, and another gourd instrument, the *guayo*, are also used. The total effect is arresting, with a sensual quality that American musicians never can duplicate.

Best of all, we think, is the old-style Cuban

music. Drop into a middle-class dance-hall and you will hear pulse-stirring *danzóns* and *sons*, played as they were in years past, with flute cadenzas and plaintive piano solos lending a haunting minor quality. This rhythm is more provocative, with a strongly accented beat. The true *criolla* interpretation is infinitely preferable, we feel, to the Americanized style used by orchestras at the smarter places, and while Cubans may look down their noses when you say you like the *estilo academia*, that is, dance-hall style, it still gets our vote. Other spots (the *Fritas* dives particularly) give a brassy rendition with braying trumpet and saxophone, but this stentorian delivery completely kills the minor mood that makes Cuban music so seductive.

As for Cuban songs, there is a new one every week to take the city by storm. Havana dotes on either dramatic and fervent lyrics or humorous songs; the most popular have lyrics with *double entendre*, and everyone chuckles over their bawdy refrains. The Cubans know and love all their songs, old or new, and when an orchestra plays a medley of former hits, the dancers join in the chorus with gusto. There are also *pregóns*, or hot numbers that are coon-shouted, and Afro-Cuban songs, slower in rhythm and sung with much ululation. Their lyrics are interspersed with voodoo (*ñáñigo*) words which most people, including the authors, cannot understand! The country songs are still another type, played with guitar accompaniment and sung in a

high-pitched chant. These *punto guajiro* melodies are the modern equivalent of the old troubadour songs, for the *guajiros* ad lib as they sing, weaving the people and events they know, into the songs.

With more than a week-end to spend, don't confine your night life to the places where you drink and dance and gamble. If you are staying for a week or longer, it is a good idea to look up the listing of forthcoming social events in the English-language newspapers. If any big charity balls are being held at the hotels or night clubs, take advantage of the chance to see Havana's best at close range. Such affairs bring out the conservative first families who are not always seen around, the ancestral jewels and a dazzling array of gowns. Everybody knows everybody else and you can't fail to catch the festive spirit. You will find other suggestions for nocturnal diversion in Chapter III. Here we limit ourselves to a discussion of the bars and night clubs, since this is what visitors with little time at their disposal usually mean when they talk about going places and doing things.

There are several types of night clubs in Havana. Some, like places at *Las Fritas*, offer sensational entertainment. Often the exotic atmosphere is especially trumped-up for the tourist trade. Small native places, where Cubans of modest incomes go, are quieter. The music played will be in the old style; few tourists will be in sight. Panchin is one of

these. Finally, there are the smart spots such as Sans Souci, sophisticated and charming, where you go to see and be seen. Try them all.

BARS: Night life begins with cocktails, ends with cock's crow. A good starting point is the *Aire del Mar* bar in the Nacional Hotel; intimate (due to the astute architect who made it so small that a dozen people crowd it) and smart (due to the herd instinct that makes people go places already crowded) and gay (due to the fact that it is small *and* crowded). Over the week-end Cubans flock to the Nacional for tea-dancing too.

The shady, spacious Sevilla bar is another favorite. We liked the big wicker lounge chairs and the seafood croquettes served as free lunch. They never give you enough of them, though! Every afternoon there is tea-dancing in the cool patio outside, next to the tiled wishing-well. In the Sevilla arcade is a bar most tourists don't find, the *Bohío*, with rough walls and thatched roof, like a real countryman's hut. It's air-conditioned, nicely dim, and there is dancing to the music of a mechanical record player. The *Bohío* stays open till around midnight.

We have mentioned the Floridita Bar before. This is a focal point for Cuban men-about-town. Some day, someone will be smart enough to wire it for sound, then retire handsomely on the money he makes from blackmailing, for the Floridita is the clearing house for the city's news, scandal and

gossip. Six to nine is cocktail time, when practically every businessman in Havana stops there for a quick one, en route home.

If you want a quiet hide-out, Prado 86 is the place, or El Patio, where you sip your drink in shady, ancient courtyards. The Presidente's lounge is another good stopping-off point, especially if you happen to be in Vedado. And in the basement of the Hotel Regina is an attractive rendezvous called Tony's Club. Because it is off the tourist path, few visitors ever get there. Practically a testimonial for Cuban tiles, everything is colorfully ceramic, even the stairs you descend. Take a look at the long old-style charcoal stove in one corner, quite an antithesis to the juke-box that stands in another. After six-thirty is the time to go there.

None of the night clubs wakes up until eleven; all are at their gayest from twelve to three. You have time, therefore, to stop for an after-dinner liqueur, to see a *Jai-alai* game, or to have a little drive along the Malecón before making the rounds.

## THE HIGH SPOTS

GRAN CASINO NACIONAL: No one will believe you really went to Havana unless you visit the Casino. The nymphs dancing round the fountains in the gardens are just as enchanting by moonlight as they have been described, the gaming rooms are as exciting and the ballroom as sumptuous. The Casino has a Continental rather than Cuban air; it might

have been transplanted from the Riviera, and is a haunt of local café society. In fact, it's the Cubans who do most of the heavy gambling; one young blood we know was forced to beg the croupiers not to allow him to play after the fifteenth of each month, so that his fast-vanishing bank account could have an occasional breathing spell!

*Asides on gambling:* The average American has never been inside a gambling room before. After all, the Bradleys, Piping Rocks and Arrowheads are few and far between in our country, and we find little opportunity to indulge in this night life of the gods of finance. It is likely, therefore, that you may lose your head, your sense of proportion and your souvenir money if you don't watch your step. Remember that this is nothing like a game of craps at a house-party or a Tuesday-night poker session with the boys and girls back home. Before you walk into the gaming room, decide (and be honest with yourself) how much you can comfortably afford to lose. Whether it is five dollars or a hundred, set that as a limit and let someone else hold the rest of your money if you don't trust yourself. If you win, quit. Don't try to break the bank; you won't. If you lose, don't try to recoup. It's a long walk back to town.

You'll get a choice of roulette, chemin-de-fer, craps, twenty-one, bird-cage or baccarat. Our advice to novices is to stick to the roulette wheel. It is the most exciting, gives you the biggest run for



your money, and can be played for smaller stakes than anything else the Casino offers.

If you are a real gambler you probably won't follow our advice. If you are a timid soul, you probably will just watch. But don't say you haven't been warned!

Incidentally, it is quite permissible to spend the evening at a table in the Casino's ballroom without once setting foot in the gambling room. The Cuban and American orchestras are always good, and the elaborate floor show is usually imported from Broadway for the benefit of Cuban habitués. Last season they went mad over the Chester Hale Girls! There is also a congenial bar with deep leather chairs, where all the guests make at least one stop, and where, since the shrewd management misses no bets, an impressive row of slot machines is conveniently arrayed. The Casino operates only during the winter season—December through March.

**SANS SOUCI:** Seven miles from town, open all year round, Sans Souci is almost a national institution as far as the Cubans are concerned. Its popularity has never waned during a quarter-century of existence, quite a success story in this city where the whim of the crowd is unpredictable and night clubs spring up one season only to collapse dismally the next. Sans Souci will be one of your favorite places, too. Everything is under the stars: the music, the granite dance floor, the tables which are set

beneath lantern-lit trees. Magnificent gardens surround the building, and the traditional younger-generation pastime is to stroll hand-in-hand through their winding, shrub-enclosed paths after eluding the ever-present chaperone. Stay away from the garden's pool, though. That's where, so the tale goes, infuriated suitors throw the girls who say no! When the moon is full, Sans Souci turns off artificial light, the orchestra plays languorous waltzes, and you dance in the magic of the moonlight, convinced that nothing again will ever seem so glamorous.

A gaming room, smaller but quite as popular as the Casino's, is waiting for those who want to try their luck between dances. Unfortunately, almost everybody does. The large floor show is almost international in character but the *rumba* dancers are fixtures. Elpidio and Margot have been delighting Sans Souci customers for six years now, and there's a good chance they'll be there for another six. Even if you don't spend the evening, at least stop at the bar, which is decorated with cartoons of local celebrities.

THE CASINO DE LA PLAYA, known to natives as the Summer Casino, is a smaller edition of Gran Casino Nacional, right across from its more famous relative, and set in the same aristocratic formal gardens. It is open from April through November. Little Casino is fun, but we can't help wondering why it is not open-air when the nights are so balmy and star-struck, why it flaunts only a paper moon when

the real thing is right there, begging for customers. However, the *opéra-bouffe* setting is beguiling, and the two gambling rooms hold your interest (and your money) as adequately as the Big Casino. The dance floor is a mechanical marvel. It rises high when the floor show goes on; so no spectator can mumble bitterly about missing anything. Cubans dote on the Summer Casino; it draws a big crowd during the little season.

TROPICANA: About twenty minutes' run from town on the road to Oriental Park is this new glamour spot, formerly the *Villa Mina*, one of Havana's most famous private estates. The main house is large, formal and rambling. Inside, the *décor* is fairly garish, and one cannot help feeling that the hall should be left clear of the slot machines that give it a grab-'em-as-they-pass air. There are, of course, complete gambling facilities. Dancing and entertainment are out-of-doors in a garden spot backgrounded with tropical trees, massed in heavy creeping vines that sway in the breeze. Farther on, there is a neon-lighted pool, eerily green, from whose center music rises mysteriously—organ music, piped from the house! The gardens would make even a Burbank envious. You will marvel at the luxuriance of Tropicana's plant life, feeling as though this were some fantastic corner of the world where a magician had waved his wand to make every leaf twice as large, every flower twice as sweetly scented.

THE EDEN CONCERT in the heart of town is one

of our pet spots. It is within walking distance of almost any hotel in the city (warning: Cubans regard the idea of walking more than a block with undisguised horror); it is informal, and everyone goes there. Almost any night you can find a few politicians, sugar planters, congressmen and local celebrities at the bar or on the dance floor. Because the music is above average, the lights soft and the stone dance floor open to the night, Eden is pleasant for either an evening's stay or an hour's diversion.

*Note to men-without-women:* The Eden has professional hostesses whom you can spot seated at tables in groups of twos and threes. You may dance with them, but use your discretion about pursuing the acquaintance. Professional hostesses, by the way, get a percentage on drinks consumed in their company.

MONTMARTRE, in Vedado, is situated atop an office building directly behind the Nacional Hotel. Nice for dancing because the floor is made of glass, lighted from beneath, and patterned like a roulette layout. You can play roulette as well as dance it, for there's a complete gaming room.

BAJO LA LUNA: You might drop by at the Nacional's patio night club for a little while, to dance on the smooth, marble floor *bajo la luna*, under the moon. Since there is only occasional entertainment, the place is rarely crowded and curfew rings at midnight.

## LOW-DOWN SPOTS

LAS FRITAS are the roadside honky-tonks you have heard so much about. *Fritas* is Cuban slang for hamburger, and this name designates the whole cluster of refreshment stands, cabarets, shooting galleries and dance-halls along Quinta Avenida out toward Marianao. There are many night clubs, but the Café de los Tres Hermanos is the one to visit, if only for Chori's sake. Chori is a husky, imposing, ebony Negro who plays drums and tympani instruments as you have never heard them played before, now listening to his effects, now throwing back his head in exaltation, now screwing his face into amazing contortions. The dancing at *Tres Hermanos* is expert, sensuous, exciting. Buy the mulatto dancers a drink if you want to, but no more.

THE PENNSYLVANIA (We're going back some day, just to find out how it got its name!) stands in the midst of another little cluster of *fritas* stalls nearer *La Playa*. Its exterior is an open-air restaurant, complete with soda-fountain. Inside, however, is a large, cool, dimly lit cabaret with French windows. Rarely do you see tourists here; it is a haunt of middle-class Cubans, unpretentious, but with excellent music. For a glimpse of how the Cuban white-collar class diverts itself, by all means go to the Pennsylvania.

PANCHIN: Across the road from the Pennsylvania is this other native spot—not so large, not so cool,

decidedly dimmer. Here you dance and drink in semi-darkness to disturbing, orgiastic music, certainly the hottest in town. If you want to watch Cuban dancing at its best, this is the place. The patrons are almost professional; their dancing is fluid, rhythmic, expert. Better than a lesson at Arthur Murray's. We understand that a surprise flashlight photo taken at Panchin on Tuesday nights when they get a big play would catch every middle-class businessman in town, out on the town! There is no entertainment, since the customers prefer to concentrate on their own dancing.

TIO SAM: Half a block east of the Pennsylvania is a tumbledown, open-air building where *Tio Sam* (really!) runs a Negro dance-hall. Your chauffeur may try to dissuade you from going. Pay no attention. His lack of enthusiasm will be due to the fact that this poor place pays no commission. We say "poor" advisedly. It is not ten cents a dance here, but *two* cents a dance. Quite a sight, too: Negro wenches with typically jutting hip-carriage, decked out in improvised evening gowns; men ranging in color from *café con leche* to *café solo*, some quite dandified, others just plain threadbare poor—all dancing with animal abandon and dancing magnificently. Between dances, the proprietor trots around, busily punching each taxi-dancer's ticket. The music is the old-fashioned type, slow and seductive.

Watch, but don't dream of going on the floor

yourself, and don't do more than give American cigarettes to the habitués, if you are asked for any.

All along the row of *fritas* stands, there are rickety little dance-halls, open-air affairs where the music is low-down and good. No floor shows, but the dancers themselves going to town with unaffected gusto. Casanova is one you might try, and Club Flotante another.

SPORT ANTILLANO: A large native dance-hall in the city patronized by the lower-class Cubans-without-women. Hostesses of all sizes, colors and shapes initiate the unaccompanied male into the intricacies of *danzón*, *son*, *paso doble*, or follow with equal ease his version of the fox-trot and shag. It is entirely correct, also, for men to bring their own partners; so feminine tourists need not feel shy about going. The music never stops. Even if you don't dance, you will enjoy watching. Since the hostesses average about thirty dances each night, and double that on Saturdays and Sundays, they are more expert than most teachers. As a matter of fact, many Americans go there to learn the Cuban dances, then astonish their friends with their proficiency. It is the they-laughed-when-I-sat-down-at-the-piano technique. Try to get to the Antillano on either a Tuesday or Friday, when the management hold *verbenas* (gala nights) and four orchestras and a large crowd are present. Other equally interesting dance-halls in the city are the Habana-Sport and the Marti y Belona.

## NO LOITERING

Across from the Capitol in front of the Saratoga and Pasaje Hotels are outdoor sidewalk cafés with all-girl orchestras. These sad efforts to capture the *toujours-gai-hoop-la* atmosphere of Paris have mushroomed up solely for the tourist trade. Don't even stop for so much as a drink unless it is Carnival-time, when an excellent view of the *comparsas* can be had from their tables. Then, of course, it is necessary to make advance reservations.

**SLOPPY JOE'S:** A much-publicized bar that leaves us cold. The backless stools aren't comfortable and the drinks certainly no better than average, though they do have a reputation for Planters' Punches. Too many tourists worship at this dubious shrine. As a matter of fact, many one-day cruisers get there, sit there, drink there, and don't stir from there until sailing. We suppose if you are somewhat forlorn, the glad-hand reception makes you feel at home but there are so many more attractive bars which merit patronage that it would be a pity to restrict your bouts with Bacchus only to this one.

**WATERFRONT DIVES:** All along the waterfront are a number of night clubs and cabarets, traditional last stops for travelers boatward bound. We don't like any of them. Their sole reason for existence is to provide the smoking-room stories of wild life in Havana, with which John Doe regales the boys at the next club stag back home. Prices are high; food, liquor and music are inferior and the



atmosphere completely phony. If you feel you can't leave town without having seen at least one, however, Jiggs and the Kursaal are the least objectionable.

## AND SO TO BED

For a nice finale to your evening, or a nice start for your day, drop over at the dingy restaurant in Mercado Colon, which is always open, and rub shoulders with the farmers who have just brought in tomorrow's chickens. The *pierna* sandwiches or *media noches*, good eating at any time, are positively ambrosial at five in the morning. Or, returning from the Casino or Sans Souci, have your *café con leche* at the *Aire Libre*, better known as Twelfth and Twenty-third (its address), in Vedado. The food is good and inexpensive—one reason why it is such a favorite with Havana's going-out set. Also in the we-never-sleep category is the *Culebrinas*, right by the bridge leading from Vedado into Miramar, where you can munch a sandwich to the strains of guitar music.

In town there are many all-night bars and *lecherías*; two especially famous are the Toledo and El Ariete. Both are fairly large and have imposing rows of *reservados*. They were the favorite last-stops of the preceding generation, and today, still, the older men-about-town wouldn't dream of meeting the milkman without first having dropped by at one of them. *La Bengala*, around the corner

from Eden Concert, is the taxi-drivers' hang-out; if you want the low-down on the town's goings-on, you can get it here, any four A.M. There is really no need to mourn, as did an American we know, because there is no Reuben's in Havana!

We enjoyed doing the town, but we get most nostalgic remembering the paternal gleam in the eye of the Sevilla's night-watchman every time we trailed in toward dawn. He was a fine figure of a man, practically seven feet tall and fully half as wide, nattily uniformed in khaki. Gargantua's smile would suggest that he hoped we had used our time to good advantage. "Good Night," we would murmur, trying to brazen it out, but "Good Morning!" was what he would always cheerfully boom in reply.

## RECOMMENDED BARS

AIRE DEL MAR in the Nacional Hotel. Tiny and overcrowded but *the* place to go. Tea-dancing over week-ends. Expensive.

EL ARIETE. San Miguel 52. Open all night. A favorite with old-timers. Medium-priced.

BOHÍO. In the Sevilla-Biltmore arcade, entrance on the Prado. A Cuban rendezvous. Dancing. Air-conditioned. Inexpensive.

CULEBRINAS. Calzada 1263. Open all night. Open-air. Inexpensive.

FLORIDITA. Obispo 557. Like Forty-second Street and Broadway, if you stay here long enough, you'll meet everybody you know in Havana. Frozen *Daiquiris* a specialty. Medium-priced.

EL PATIO. Prado and Genios. Smart bar and patio lounge in a beautiful setting. Expensive.

PLAZA. The bar of the Plaza Hotel, Agramonte 277, is spacious and cool. They have a way with *Presidentes*. Medium-priced.

PRADO 86. Back of the liquor store of that name is a masculine-looking bar and a pleasant patio. Cubans call it the "speak-easy." Medium-priced.

PRESIDENTE: Cocktail lounge of the Presidente Hotel, Avenida de los Presidentes, in Vedado. Medium-priced.

SEVILLA-BILTMORE. To the right, as you enter the Sevilla-Biltmore Hotel. A comfortable, convenient place. Tea-dancing in the patio. Medium-priced.

TOLEDO. Aguila 520. Gay Nineties favorite, re-

cently redecorated in Spanish style. Known for its *reservados*. The food is good too. Open all night. Medium-priced.

TONY'S CLUB. Industria 410. In the cellar of the Regina Hotel. Spanish-style bar with dancing. Cheap.

## RECOMMENDED NIGHT SPOTS

Note: All the night clubs in Havana have bars where there is no cover charge. If you are budgeting your night life, don't take a table, but stay at the bar. You can dance just as well, or see the floor shows, and the saving is substantial.

BAJO LA LUNA. Patio night club of the Nacional Hotel. Good Cuban and American music. Minimum charge. Medium-priced. Closes at midnight. Forty cents by taxi from town.

CASINO DE LA PLAYA, familiarly known as the Summer Casino. A miniature edition of the Gran Casino. Floor show, dancing, gambling, bar. Minimum charge. Expensive.

CASANOVA. Quinta Avenida at *La Playa*. Low-Class dance kiosk. Cheap.

EDEN CONCERT. Zulueta 256. Open-air night club featuring Cuban entertainment and music. Open all year round and open nightly until the last ship leaves port. Hostesses. Cover charge. Twenty cents by cab from any other point in town. Expensive.

GRAN CASINO NACIONAL. Playa de Marianao. About six miles from town, so you'll need a car. Open from December through April. Large floor show and music by Cuban and American orchestras in the ballroom, where there is a minimum charge. Gaming rooms and bar. Evening dress unnecessary. Expensive.

HABANA-SPORT. Calles Galiano and San Jose. Dance-hall. See Sport Antillano for details.

MARTI Y BELONA. Calles Amistad and Monte. Dance-hall. See Sport Antillano.

MONTMARTRE. Around the corner from the Nacional Hotel, in Vedado. Night club and cabaret. Gaming room. Cover charge. Taxi from town costs forty cents. Expensive.

PANCHIN. Quinta Avenida and C, in Marianao. A native hot-spot with the best music in town. No cover charge. Cheap.

PENNSYLVANIA. Quinta Avenida and C, in Marianao. Large, cool cabaret. Inexpensive.

SANS SOUCI. Carretera de Arroyo Arenas Kil. 15. Seven miles out of the city near Country Club Park. The show place of Havana and one of the spots you must not miss. Elaborate floor show. Open all year. Minimum charge. Expensive.

SPORT ANTILLANO. 412 Zanja, in town. Forty cents is the admission price to this native dance-hall if you bring a partner. Ten cents is the cost for a man alone. Each dance with a hostess costs five cents; four cents for the girl and one for the house! Opens early and closes late, all year round.

Tuesdays or Fridays are the best nights. There is a show (not too good) around one.

TIO SAM'S DANCE HALL. Half a block east of the Pennsylvania, off Fifth Avenue. Go to watch but don't participate. This can be rough stuff! Cheap.

LOS TRES HERMANOS. On Quinta Avenida in Marianao. Tawdry night club with native entertainment. Chori is the attraction here. Cover charge. Open all year round. Medium-priced.

TROPICANA. On the road to Oriental Park in Marianao. Garden restaurant and cabaret. Gambling room. Cover charge. Expensive.



## *To Market, To Market*

SHOPPING in a foreign country brings out either the best or the worst in people. After a careful survey of tourist shoppers we have come to the conclusion that, like Gaul, they are divided into three parts.

The first is the rolling stone that gathers too much moss. This is a mild, inoffensive individual, perfectly rational on every other score, into whose eyes comes the light of the fanatic when shopping is in order. It is an outcropping of the old instinct to plunder the conquered city, triumphantly to bear home the loot. Such a shopper is a menace. Money burns in his pocket. He actually is miserable unless he has bought up everything in sight. He cannot bear the thought that someone else has bagged one more bottle of perfume, one more box of cigars. We shall never forget one bad example

who acquired a street vendor's complete stock of thirty-five pseudo-ivory cigarette holders merely because (he said) they looked so nice—all in a bunch! Postscript: Two years later they were still lying in the bottom drawer of his desk—all in a bunch.

The second is the lamb that begs to be led to the slaughter. This helpless type—more often a man—has a list of the folks back home who must receive appropriate keepsakes. Rarely does he have more than a vague inkling of how to tackle the job. He knows neither what to buy nor where to buy it, and, unhappily enough, is wide-open to all suggestions. Also a menace, since he becomes the prey of unscrupulous shopkeepers who find in him a heaven-sent opportunity for unloading dead stock. With sorrowful shakes of our heads we recall our helpless friend—let's call him Mr. L.—who innocently asked a casual shipboard acquaintance to go shopping in Havana with him. Unluckily he picked a woman who had been a tour conductor in the past. Naturally she was glad to oblige; she knew the proprietors of all the shops to which she steered him. Mr. L. got his shopping done, but he spent about a hundred dollars more than he should have. His guide received a handsome gift in appreciation of her services; a courtesy that might have been omitted had he realized that she got a substantial rake-off on each item he bought. Mr. L. was taken over, and a neat job too.

Then there is the graduate of the Get-It-For-



Less School—in nine cases out of ten, a woman, we must reluctantly admit. She sets out, fiercely determined never to pay the price first quoted, no matter how standard the merchandise. Of course, as soon as she enters a store, the shopkeeper recognizes her horse-trading proclivities, and automatically ups prices. So, after the bargaining-bout is over, he still can show a profit, though she foolishly imagines she has bagged another prize. We have all met the Haggler too many times. But her real menace lies in the way she undermines tourist morale by exulting over fellow-shoppers. No matter what you paid, she always got it for less. It is she who spreads tall stories about the sharp practices of tradespeople in foreign countries, and it is she who inspires them.

It is lucky for shopkeepers' sanity that there is the uncounted species—the species to which we hope you belong—the intelligent shopper. This is the shopper who unconsciously boosts the reputation of Americans abroad. He knows in advance what he wants to buy; he probably has a neat list which is checked off as purchases are made. He won't let himself be inveigled into acquiring useless junk. He pays fair prices, realizing that tradesmen must make a living too, but he commands respect by refusing to be exploited. Finally, he has imagination enough to prefer unusual and distinctive souvenirs as well as energy enough to shop for them.

Intelligently handled, a shopping spree in Havana is fun and need not be approached in a wild-

eyed, do-or-die manner. Here are a few hints to help you over the hurdles:

Follow the Christmas slogan and *Shop Early*. Don't wait until the last day of your visit and then expect to get everything you want. As you'll soon find out, in Havana everything takes time. Once, it actually took us three hours by the clock, just to order a cake.

Expect to get what you pay for—no more, no less. Many tourists come back, loudly screaming about being gypped. At the risk of seeming callous, we boldly state that most of them deserve it. The first shopping commandment should be: *Know thy store*. This is the place to point out that Cuban merchants are entitled to a just profit. That is why they are in business. However, should retailers ask unduly high prices, don't just be outraged. Take definite action. We suggest that you compare prices on the same items at two or three shops, rather than buying blindly at the first one visited. If you do purchase something that you later find elsewhere for less, report the matter. A cash refund for the difference may not necessarily be given, but the store will be glad to allow a credit. Then, of course, it is necessary to buy something else to use up the credit—a vicious circle! At larger stores, prices may run a bit higher, but, after all, the same is true in New York, where a Fifth Avenue specialty shop gets greater mark-ups on identical merchandise than a Thirty-fourth Street

department store. On the whole, you will discover that Havana stores are as reputable as our own.

If you have Cuban friends, by all means trot one along when you shop; even an American who speaks Spanish is a help. Be sure they are friends, though, not just casual acquaintances who may steer you only to the stores paying them just for that purpose. Similarly, regard the establishments your chauffeur recommends with a weather-eye, as his boosting of a shop is usually prompted by the commission involved. Once prices are checked and found comparable to those quoted elsewhere, there is no reason not to patronize the store, of course.

*What* you buy depends upon your taste and discrimination. We hope you have plenty of both. Not for you, please, the expatriate Mexican hats, the castanets, the *maracas* (despite the theory that you haven't been to Havana at all unless you come down the gangplank shaking a pair). Please free-lance and don't be satisfied with routine ideas. There are always exciting, unusual mementoes to be discovered if you will snoop around. Regardless of what else we buy, our rule is to find for ourselves some one article that will always be cherished as a symbol of its country of origin. At a curio shop off the Prado we spotted a tray of weird little aboriginal stone heads. These were part of a scientist's estate, the shopowner told us, primitive burial dolls made by the Siboney Indians who inhabited the island when Columbus first arrived. We be-

lieved him, too, since the only other place that had them is the National Museum. At a dollar each, we won't be disillusioned, even if our friend romanced a bit. Considered solely for their decorative value, they are finds. Historically they spell Cuba, for the Siboneys were the original Cubans. Your taste may not run to stone heads or similar antiquities; we cite the incident merely to show that it is possible to find something novel by being alert.

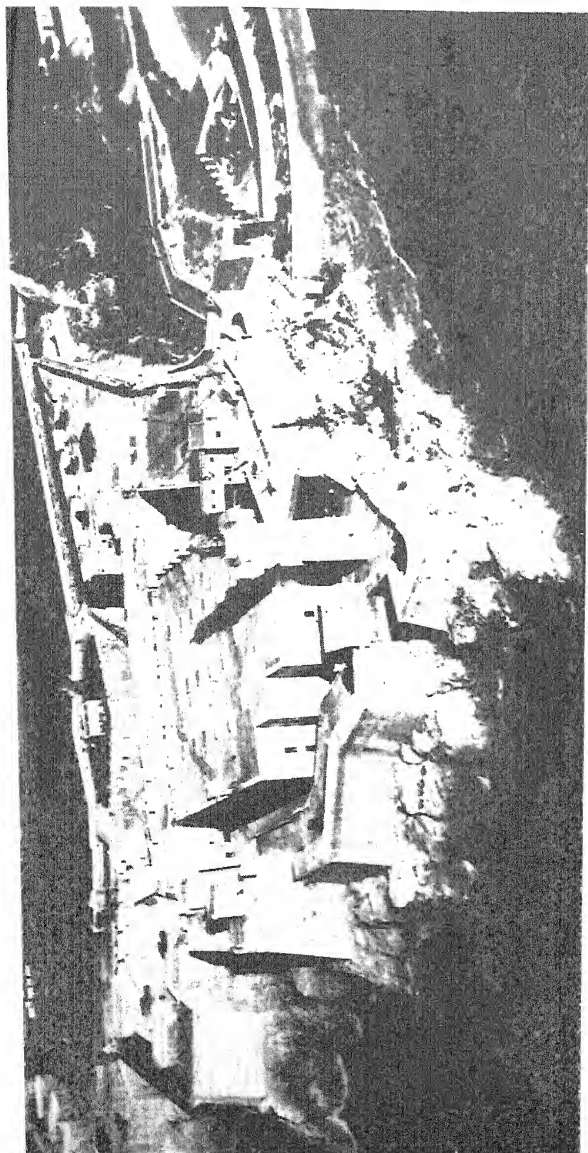
A few reminders before the tour begins:

Keep bills for all purchases, both to avoid trouble going through U.S. Customs, and to verify amounts spent for friends.

By the way, do be a little independent on this point. Execute commissions only for good friends who will appreciate the effort and be glad to accept a substitute if their original choice can't be found. Shopping around for this kind of alligator bag or that kind of face-powder consumes valuable minutes. It's a *pleasure* trip you are taking. Collect from them in advance, too, rather than spend your own money.

Apropos of money, travelers' checks can be cashed any place, but there is no chance at all to cash a personal check unless you have a friend to vouch for you at his bank. If your own bank has a Havana branch, you still must present credentials.

Remember again to have American money changed into Cuban before shopping. You will come out ahead, since the dollar usually is worth more in exchange than the *peso*.



PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS

AN AIR VIEW OF MORRO CASTLE, HAVANA HARBOR



PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS

PRIMITIVE TRANSPORT OF SUGAR CANE

BARRELS OF RUM

BACARDI



## WHAT EVERYONE BUYS IN CUBA

**LIQUOR:** Rum, of course, is the best buy. Cuban rum is famous all over the world, and you buy it for less than half its cost in the States. The best known varieties are Bacardi and Havana Club, manufactured by Arechabala, though if you are a connoisseur you may want to try some less-known brands. Cubans, by the way, consider Bacardi practically a synonym for rum and rarely buy any other brand. It is certainly not worthwhile to bring back Scotch; you may save a few cents a quart at most. Fine French liqueurs are a thought, though. There is quite a saving, and some types which are becoming increasingly scarce at home can be found readily. Aside from Cuban rum, we suggest that you indulge in rarities, such as Spanish wines and brandies which are difficult to locate in the States.

Customs regulations allow travelers to bring back only a gallon of liquor per person, duty-free; that is, five  $1/5$  bottles. If you want variety, buy half-sizes, two of which make a fifth.

All the rum companies maintain free bars for the benefit of tourists. Of course it is extremely pleasant to sample their wares free of charge, but he warned that the company's salesman will do his best to sell you your full quota at prices a bit higher than elsewhere. This helps average out the cost of those *Daiquiris* you surrounded so gleefully. The bars are worth visiting, however. Just be forewarned. Bacardi's famous bar, agreeably enough, is the only

one that has no ax to grind. No attempt is made to sell you, no matter how many drinks are downed. Open to tourists from eleven to one, every day but Sunday, its host is Pappi Valiente, as well known a Havana landmark as Morro Castle. Go, if only to meet the man who has met practically every other American who ever came to Havana.

Don't buy liquor in shops catering to tourists, but go where the Cubans go: to Prado 86, run by Otto Precht and Gene Castro. That was where we met Cary Grant; so we'll always have a soft spot for the establishment! Or go to La Vizcaina, another important shop with an enormous array of liquors as well as a grocery section reminiscent of Macy's. Their stock includes some brands in sizes not obtainable elsewhere. Or try any one of *La Mia* Stores (addresses are in the telephone directory). This A & P-like chain specializes in cut-rate prices on groceries and liquors and is usually cheaper than anyone else though you have to tote your own packages.

Spanish wines and brandies were scarce in Cuba during the Spanish Civil War but shipments are coming in more freely now. We bought ours at Antigua de Mendy, a musty wine-shop in the old section of Havana. The baldish, paunchy proprietor is a wine-taster of experience. Give him a chance and he will discourse at great length about his stock, fondling each bottle lovingly. And, of course, there's El Baturro, the old wine-tavern mentioned



in Chapter IV, where you can taste their sixty varieties of wine before buying.

PERFUMES: Even if you don't want perfume for yourself, you will be buying some for friends or as gifts; so it is well to remember the following points:

Open all packages to be sure the contents are sealed, therefore undiluted, and that there has been no undue evaporation.

Some manufacturers restrict the quantities of each brand that can be brought into the United States. Regulations change constantly and should be checked.

The European war has pretty nearly put an end to spectacular savings on the perfumes actually imported from France. Many brands from important houses cannot be secured at all. Prices, fairly well standardized all over town, are on the increase. However—ray of hope—some French perfumers, such as Millot, are bottling their products in Havana and these Cuban-made French brands hold to their pre-war cost. You may still find some price variations, depending upon trade conditions, the store you are in or the shopkeeper's mood at the moment. It is best to do a little comparison shopping before you finally buy.

If you care to experiment you will find some French brands not known in the States, just as fine as the products of widely advertised houses, and considerably cheaper. *Tabu* and *Emir* by Dana of

Paris are musky glamorous odors we liked; they are just beginning to be talked about. An ounce costs about two dollars. *Fleur de Tabac* by Cherigan is worth trying too. Men like the lotion of this scent to use after shaving.

Myrurgia was our favorite brand among the Spanish perfumes now being made in Cuba. Their scents have a heady quality that is new to American nostrils. One of the finest is *Maderas de Oriente* at about \$1.50 for the half-ounce size.

Not enough tourists know that Cuba produces fine perfumes and toilet waters which are extremely inexpensive, compared to the French. Sample those manufactured by Agustin Reyes, who markets a Guerlain-like toilet water, or Drialys, who puts out several excellent perfumes in charming containers. We like their *Nardos*, made from the Cuban flower of that name, *Rico Habano*, and *Noche Cubana* in particular, only \$1.20 each for a good-sized bottle. Cubans enjoy violet odors and each perfumer makes his own version, all of them pleasant. An enormous bottle of white-violet toilet water costs sixty cents at Dr. Lorie's American Drug Store.

*Economy note:* A good trick is to buy the toilet water or lotion of the French perfume you prefer, for personal use. It is much cheaper; you can use it more freely; and the odor is almost as strong. For warm weather we found *Tabu* toilet water (\$2.00 for a five-ounce flacon) quite strong enough.

Practically every place in Havana sells perfumes, from the magazine counter at your hotel to El En-

canto, the best-known department store. El Encanto probably has the largest stock and is a one-price house; so if you're afraid of being overcharged elsewhere, patronize this shop. However, we found them a few cents higher on many brands.

El Lazo de Oro, which carries all of Drialys' perfumes, also has a complete stock and sometimes features brands not sold elsewhere. Casa Berkowitz and The French Doll, specializing in Dana of Paris' products, are good for perfumes too. And there is always Woolworth's.

*Reminder:* French and Cuban lipsticks, rouges, face-powders, talcs and soaps are inexpensive in Havana.

**ALLIGATOR:** South of Matanzas, in Santa Clara Province, is the great desolate swampland of *Ciénega de Zapata*, inhabited mostly by alligators. Hardy hunters live here months on end getting the skins for the bags and belts and slippers tourists buy. Articles of alligator hide are all over the place, somewhat monotonous as far as fashion appeal goes, even when they are expensive. Generally, there is room for better styling and a wider color range. Colored alligator is U.S. dyed; perhaps that's why you see so little of it. Right now, almost everything alligator is either that regulation golden-brown or bleached tan. Good alligator is flexible with a deep, ruddy gleam; the cheaper kind is dull, stiff and cracks readily. Don't let price alone be the criterion, for paying a bit more means longer wear from the wallet or whatnot. A fine belt (be sure

you know what size to get) costs approximately \$1.00; a good wallet at least \$2.50; a nice cigarette case, about \$1.00, and smart, squared-off compacts about \$3.00. Casa del Perro is a well-known shop for all this.

Men always appreciate alligator slippers (about \$3.50 for flats without backs; \$5.00 and up for house slippers), but we think the outstanding item for them is alligator shoes, which cost a young fortune at home, when you can find them. Twelve dollars is about right for first-grade alligator, completely hand-stitched. Be sure the shoe is well-made, flexible and has a comfortable last. Casa del Perro or Casa Garcia have good assortments. At these stores, too, are brief-cases of alligator. They cost around \$20.00 and are a wonderful gift for the man who has everything.

Shoes and slippers for women leave us cold. The same styles are seen everywhere, over and over; in addition, they definitely look old-hat. The better bags are decidedly worthwhile, though. The Nacional's gift shop had some mammoth portmanteau styles that were stunning, certainly worth the \$20.00 they cost.

If you want to treat yourself to something special, Casa del Perro has luxurious alligator overnight cases, regally lined in Russia leather, for about \$30.00, just half what they would cost in any American city.

Alligator shoes for children are really news. Classic barefoot sandals in deep tan cost \$1.95 and

up at The French Doll, depending on size. There are boys' oxfords or ties, too, on good roomy lasts.

If you have time, walk through the leather district on Calle Teniente Rey. Exporting hides is an important Cuban industry; you will pass warehouse after warehouse, some manufacturing and selling right on the spot. This is also the district for saddlery shops and custom boot-makers. Besides the educational value, your jaunt has its economical aspect. Prices are lower in this neighborhood.

**NOVELTY JEWELRY:** Havana shops commit more sins in the name of costume jewelry than we like to think about. Too many concentrate on the garish, American-made junk which can be found right at home if you're so minded (though we hope not). The nicest inexpensive jewelry to buy is the seed-pod and bean variety that American stores have been importing lately. It is wearable, versatile, the color combinations interesting. Look for this at Mercado Colon and José Solis' shop on Calle Progreso, where the price is under \$1.00 for a set of necklace and bracelet. If you want shell trinkets, the ropes of tiny shells, dyed brilliant colors, are effective when worn in masses. Ignore the street peddlers and make Woolworth your Mecca, where fifty cents bags a set.

**BETTER JEWELRY:** Some of the gift shops sin by trying to unload antiquated stock: elaborate marcasite or arty semi-precious jewelry, rococo vanities and cigarette cases, all of which should have been consigned to limbo years ago. If you are buying

more expensive jewelry, the really authentic antique pieces are a wise investment. During the revolution in 1933, there was considerable looting, and in recent times refugees from Spain and Germany have been disposing of personal ornaments; so it is possible to find fine jewelry at a fraction of its worth. Snider's is famous for an extensive collection and Los Tres Hermanos, a pawnshop on Calle Consulado, has a good stock too. Speaking of pawnshops, on Calle Salud there's nothing else but. Walk along and you will covet everything in sight!

If you are rich enough to buy diamonds, you will get them for about half the U.S.A. cost. Fine French gold jewelry is much lower too. Casa Quintana, Cuervo y Sobrinos and the Palais Royal are the places to go, and there is remarkable precious jewelry at Los Tres Hermanos, too—second-hand, of course.

**CIGARS:** Havana cigars are rated a luxury in any part of the world. Fragrant, mild, they are Big Business' hallmark of success, and men have the same feeling about them that women have about imported perfume. Besides being of the finest tobacco, the Havana cigar is handmade and, machine age or no, will always be handmade. This is prescribed by law for protection of the industry. Flavor varies with the color, from the *maduro* to the *claro*, depending on when the leaves were removed from the plants. The leaf, cut when ripe, will be either *colorado* or *colorado claro*, and it is the cigars of

these colors that will give the smoker the most pleasure.

Remember the U.S. Customs limitation of a hundred to a person. Good cigars cannot be bought for nothing; about fifteen cents each is the price—low on fine tobacco. Buy only recognized brands, such as La Corona, Ramon Allones, H. Upman, Hoyo de Monterey or Romeo y Julieta, at reputable stores, such as Prado 86 or direct from the factories, to make sure you are getting what you think you are getting. Incidentally, "corona" is the name of a size in which cigars are made, so that corona-size cigars are manufactured by every factory. If you want cigars from the Corona factory, look for the *de La Corona* mark.

**WATCHES:** It's amazing to find such enormous and varied collections of fine French and Swiss timepieces all over Havana—where there is so little regard for time! The finer jewelry stores have exquisite women's watches, enameled, jeweled, set into minuscule clips; elegant pocket watches for men, thin as a razor-blade, or streamlined wrist watches. Go around and check prices, then buy only at shops of established reputation. Casa Quintana and Cuervo y Sobrinos are two of the best known. More moderate-priced shops are Casa de Hierro, La Corona and Le Trianon. There's a saving of about fifty per cent on all makes; Longines, Patek Philippe and Vacheron Constantine makes are always good buys. Be sure to hold on to bills

for any watches bought. Our Customs men are particularly careful in evaluating them; and one of us had a watch checked by three different appraisers.

PANAMAS: The first thing Panamaniacs should know is simply that Panamas are not made in Cuba; so they need not expect to see anybody sitting around weaving them under water (another polite fiction). Panamas come from Ecuador, but cost less in Havana than in the U.S.A. because of low import duties. Quality varies enormously and is determined by the closeness of the weave. The Montecristi brand is one of the best. Good Panamas for men start at \$10.00 and go up as high as \$50.00. Women's, blocked and trimmed, are to be found at \$7.50. Styling of these is somewhat on the fussy side; so it is better to buy the body and have a hat made at home. El Encanto and the shops in the Manzana de Gomez arcade are reliable for Panamas.

LINENS: The better establishments have complete stocks of table sets, hand towels, handkerchiefs and bed linens. The saving will be only on fine linens, however. Our inexpensive domestic luncheon sets, for example, are of better style and quality than those you see in Havana. But elaborate tablecloths that are prohibitively priced in the States won't bankrupt you completely here. The quality of the fabric is a delight and the intricate handwork unsurpassed. El Encanto, Fin de Siglo, La Filosofia and Los Precios Fijos—all have wide assortments.



## LESS HACKNEYED IDEAS

**RUMBA COSTUMES:** Hardly what you could call practical, but fun to own, if only for the sake of masquerades. They will make your version of the *rumba* or *son* seem so much more authentic. White with red or royal-blue piping on the ruffles is the traditional color scheme. The one-piece *Bata* is the authentic style; the two-piece versions that leave the midriff bare originated for night club use. Those at El Encanto can even be used as summer evening gowns or house-coats. They are made of organdy with huge ruffled sleeves and a flattering, ruffled peacock-train that must be swooped up over your arm. The price, \$25.00, is fairly moderate for such a breath-taking effect. El Encanto makes them to measure within three days. Casa Pilar has *rumba* costumes too, though the fabrics and workmanship are by no means as fine. This shop has the two-piece styles expressly used for exhibition dancing, as well as the one-piece outfits. Prices here start at \$15.00. You can get men's *rumba* shirts at Casa Pilar, too, for \$5.00.

**LINGERIE:** No woman who sees it can resist the exquisite underwear displayed by the better shops. Much of this merchandise was imported from France, although there is plenty of native hand-made lingerie too. Maria Borrero, El Encanto and Mathilde Cumont—all have mouth-watering selections, not for everyday wear, not what you would

consider inexpensive, but less budget-shattering than they would be at home.

**GOWNS, HATS:** We hope everybody who reads this book comes to Havana with an adequate wardrobe. If a dress must be bought at a store, be prepared to pay specialty-shop prices, for the best-looking clothes are made-to-order. We used to walk by Katharine Randolph's windows on the Prado every morning, just to see her distinctive silk prints. Twenty-five dollars and upward go the prices on exclusively styled street dresses; creations for evening in the grand-couturier manner cost about \$75.00. Mathilde Cumont and Bernabeu are also fine designers, and Maria Borrero is the Bergdorf Goodman of the town, where the leading debs go for trousseaux. If you have the time, energy and inclination it's worth while to follow the suggestions in Chapter II about having clothes made to order, inexpensively.

There are several excellent milliners along the Prado (specifically, Helene Simón, Eva, Eric and Ketty) who sell model hats or design to order. Prices vary, starting at about \$7.50, little enough for a custom-made hat.

**MEN'S CLOTHES:** Those superb hundred-twist, pure linen drill suits which make every Cuban who wears them look like a wealthy plantation owner, or at least a lottery winner, can be made to order within three days. If you have the time, it is a wise investment, for we have never seen anything comparable in the States, and they are definite aids to

masculine glamour. About \$26.00 at Casa Oscar, known for fine tailoring. Suits of linen crash (this is the regulation linen used in American suits) are about \$20.00, made to measure, and about \$15.00, ready-made. El Sol is the place to buy them.

GUAYABERAS: Our favorite and uniquely Cuban style for men, the *guayabera*, is a new angle for Americans on the old sports-shirt situation. This is the old-time fitted shirt used by Cuban countrymen for more than a hundred years, and still popular today. With reason, too. It is an all-occasion outfit. Worn closed with a black string tie, the effect is quite formal. Open at the throat, with sleeves pushed up, it is a fine working or lounging shirt. And left unbuttoned, with sports shirt underneath, the *guayabera* becomes a thin summer jacket. The four patch pockets are utilitarian; the clusters of pleating down front and back, decorative. Typical *guayaberas* are made in a coarse, unbleached, lineny fabric of deep beige. Mercado Colon has them for \$1.50. Wealthy countrymen have theirs made to order. Then the styling varies and the fabric will be fine linen or even silk. These cost about \$7.50.

CHILDREN'S CLOTHES: Any baby who gets a present from Havana is lucky. Dainty infants' wear goes for a song. Sheer little dresses, minutely embroidered, cost about \$2.00. Clothes for older children, too, typically French in style and imaginative in color, can be bought at Fin de Siglo, Vega and Precios Fijos.

LACES: Magnificent old laces are to be found in

Havana, but we strongly advise against buying them. Fine laces still cost a pretty penny, and they will eat up the better part of that hundred dollars' worth of Cuban merchandise which U. S. Customs allows you to bring in duty-free. So don't succumb to that rose-point bridal veil which will only be trotted out once every generation, anyhow. Don't even buy a *mantilla*; fine ones are expensive and we have known them to rot and fall apart after a year in our hardy climate. Resist the antique-lace fans as well; they are too fragile to stand transportation, and when would you use them, anyhow?

**CANNED FOODS:** If you enjoy Cuban food, take home some of the specialties you ate with such gusto. We probably are the only tourists on record who returned from Havana waving garlands of sausages, though we know one girl who tried to bring home a whole crateful of cocoanut ice cream! We don't advocate the idea, however, since we understand it went soupy all over the ship's refrigerator! It is unnecessary to go to such extremes, though. Cuban fruits are canned or preserved and there is no restriction on the amount you can import, within your hundred-dollar allotment. We particularly recommend *mangos* in their own syrup, cocoanut conserve (the kind served in restaurants over sliced pineapple), whole guavas in syrup (more exciting than either the paste or the jelly) and preserves of *guanábana* and orange, at about twenty cents a can. All are wonderful on ice-cream or cake and make a conversation-piece out of an ordinary

dessert. *Pavo Real*, *Estrella* or *Caribe*, the best brands, are found at La Vizcaina, any La Mia store, the nearest corner *bodega* or food stalls in Mercado Colon. Also at these places are *galletas*, those huge, flaky, irregular wafers like our pilot biscuits, only so much better. Tins fully three feet deep cost seventy-five cents. Cuban sausages, preserved in lard, are canned too. A little strong to use alone, perhaps, but they make savory additions to stews and soups. Eighty cents buys a half-pound tin.

From Spain come *berberechos*, tiny clams, about fifteen cents a can, *mejillones*, mussels in a heavenly sauce, twenty-two cents, and olives spiked with garlic for a *peseta*. If you are brave about new foods, try *calamares*—squid to you—either canned in its own ink or stuffed. About twenty-two cents. El Baturro, Antigua de Mendy, La Mia or Mercado Colon have them. Spain also sends *turrón*, that rich almond-paste candy, packed in wooden boxes. The best is about \$1.00 a pound, available everywhere.

CUBAN MAHOGANY: Decorative gadgets—bowls, cigarette boxes, book-ends, figurines, and compacts—of deeply polished native mahogany make good small gifts. You will find them at hotel gift shops, at Casa Berkowitz, and The French Doll. Comparison shopping, again, is in order.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS: Tall, tom-tom shaped *conga* drums can do double duty as end-tables in a game room. We found some of polished mahogany, about three feet tall, banded in copper and covered with goatskin, for about \$5.00. The smaller,

double drum, called the *bongó*, costs \$3.00. Viuda de Carreras has them, as well as sheet music or records of the Cuban songs you liked. The *claves*, those rosewood sticks that add such a melodic tock-tock sound to Cuban melodies, are at Woolworth's for twenty cents.

## INEXPENSIVE BUT EXCITING

Following is just an outline of the lower-bracket shopping possibilities in Havana. Use your eyes and desert the trite-and-true shopping paths. Scour old Mercado Colon, the pawnshops, the second-hand stores that line Calle Virtudes, all the small shops on Calles O'Reilly and Obispo. You will be rewarded with inexpensive finds, far more interesting than the standardized products other tourists buy.

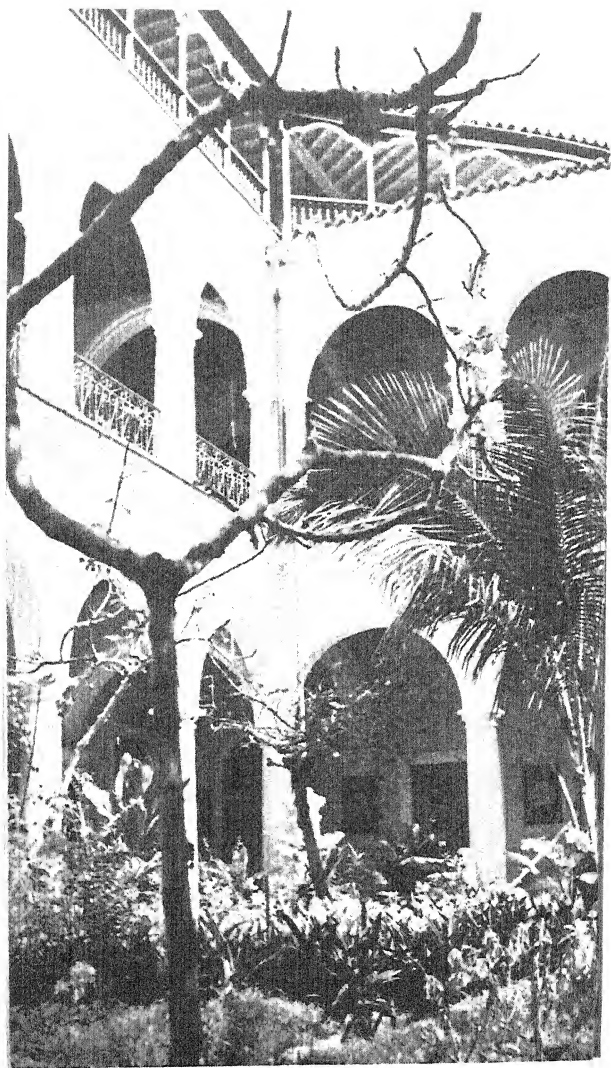
**ALPARGATAS:** Coarse blue denim slippers with heavy rope soles, laced with tapes. You know them under the Basque name, *espadrilles*. Fashionable at home for summer loafing, and only forty cents a pair in Mercado Colon. Cheaper too, if bought in quantity.

**OFFICIAL WALLETS:** In Cuba you don't have to be a policeman to carry a policeman's wallet. Printed with official insignia, they are sold to anyone who asks for them. A nice gag for men. Of black or brown topgrain, stamped in gold with the Cuban crest and "National Police" or "Constitutional Army," these bill-folds are official-looking



ROBERTO MACHADO

A PINEAPPLE FIELD



FRANCESCO ENRIQUEZ

SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY PATIO



enough to baffle any cop at home, which is certainly worth the ninety-cent price.

FANS: A gift that is *muy típico*. We suggest the less expensive ones as being quite adequate. Seventy-five cents and a dollar for hand-painting on cloth is the cost at El Encanto. Woolworth's has painted paper fans for fifteen, twenty and thirty cents. It is interesting to watch a Cuban woman buying her fan, by the way. She will flick it open and shut, manipulate several, seriously compare the ease with which they flip-flop, before making her choice.

JAI-ALAI MITTS: The closely woven reed scoops worn by *jai-alai* players. Shaped like horns-of-plenty, these basket-like affairs are stunning for table decoration, filled with flowers, fruit or gourds. Casa Tarin has the finest, at \$8.00, but shops in the Manzana de Gomez arcade carry mitts that are satisfactory, at \$2.00.

TILES: Attractive on the table under hot dishes or as wall plaques. Decorative modern tiles made in Cuba are on sale all over for about twenty-five cents each. Some of the antique Spanish tiles can still be found if you search. They are subtler in color, more intricate in design and correspondingly higher in price. El Ras and the second-hand shops on Calle Virtudes usually have them. The Antiquarium also had a good collection at \$1.00 each.

BRONZE, BRASS AND IRON: Collectors will go mad over the massive old keys, door-knockers and elaborate hinges which can be picked up for next

to nothing from the pushcarts clustered near the Mercado Unico or at Mercado Colon. If you don't want to bother tracking these down, Snider's and the Antiquarium have some—priced much higher, of course.

**POTTERY:** A new and flourishing industry in Cuba. La Tinaja has a bewildering assortment of lamp bases, vases, decorative figures—all inexpensive and in good taste. Hand-decorated, glazed plaques for the wall, at \$2.00 and up, are modern in feeling and make exciting use of color. The best buys of all are casseroles, made in every size and shape, from the mammoth affairs used for *paella* to the tiny individuals at two for a nickel. You will find them everywhere, including La Tinaja and Mercado Colon.

**PARROT CAGES:** If you are brave enough to undertake the Robinson Crusoe act, these have infinite possibilities. They are cylindrical, made of shiny tin with broad, flat bars. Visualize them used for chandeliers in a country house, or white-washed and filled with flowers for a centerpiece. Seventy-five cents at El Clarin.

**MILAGROS:** These "miracles" are queer little silver models of various parts of the body, still used by superstitious and uneducated Cubans. The theory is that if you have a pain in your foot or hand or leg or head, you buy a replica of the injured member and hang it round the neck of your favorite saint's image at the church. You do this for a friend or relative who may be similarly afflicted.

The saint proceeds forthwith to cure the sufferer—a miracle! Don't buy them to save a doctor's fee, but do buy them for the charm of their rough, almost primitive workmanship which makes them unique gadgets for lapel-pins, charm bracelets or necklaces. Find yours in small jewelry shops along Calle Compostela or at stalls in Mercado Colon. Small *milagros* are forty cents or so. Larger ones, full figures of men, women or children, bearing an astonishing resemblance to Thurber cartoons, cost sixty cents or more, depending on weight.

**TOOTHPICK HOLDERS:** The porcelain toothpick holders that are standard equipment on Cuban tables make amusing cigarette containers for the dinner table at home or are serviceable on dressing-tables to hold hairpins. Track them down at El Ras, Monserrate Ferreteria or Mercado Colon. About five cents apiece. If your thieving instincts are as well developed as ours, simply swipe them from restaurants.

**CHANCLETAS:** Slippers made of wood smoothed to a satin-like finish, with sections of old rubber inner-tube, stapled on at the toe! Cubans use them for the bath. At five cents a pair, they are amusing gifts for people whom you otherwise might not remember. For the same nickel, others with similar wooden soles but the toe part in leather. At the Mercado Colon.

## RECOMMENDED STORES

(*English is spoken, except when noted.*)

ANTIGUA DE MENDY: Pte. Zayas 203. Wines, Spanish brandies, champagnes, and Spanish *hors d'oeuvres*. Cheap. No English spoken.

ANTIQUARIUM: Neptuno 54. Old Spanish tiles, antique jewelry, china, swords, guns, objets d'art. Not too expensive.

EL BATURRO: Egido 661. Wines and tinned *hors d'oeuvres*. Inexpensive.

CASA BERKOWITZ: San Rafael 200, at Amistad. Perfumes, Cuban mahogany, novelties. Medium-priced.

MARIA BORRERO: Nacional Hotel. Lingerie, frocks. Extremely expensive.

EL CLARIN: Galiano 104. Pet shop where parrot cages are sold. Cheap.

CUERVO Y SOBRINOS: San Rafael 215. Fine jewelry, watches, Lalique crystal. Expensive.

MATHILDE CUMONT: Prado 266. Linens, gowns, handkerchiefs. Medium-priced.

LA CURONA: San Rafael 207. Moderately priced watches and jewelry.

EL ENCANTO: Calles San Rafael and Galiano. Cuba's largest department store. Perfumes, linens, lingerie, Panama hats, infants' and children's clothes, rumba costumes, fans, *guayaberas*. Prices range from low to fairly high.

LA FILOSOFIA: Neptuno 401. Fine linens at fairly low prices.

FIN DE SIGLO: Calles San Rafael and Aguila. Second most important store in Havana. Perfumes, Panama hats, linens. Moderate prices.

FRENCH DOLL: Animas 55. Perfumes, alligator, and a good novelty department arranged according to price. Maurice's habit of giving away souvenirs endears him to American tourists. Medium-priced.

CASA GARCIA: Aguila 504. Custom-made shoes for men in alligator and other leathers. Low prices.

CASA DE HIERRO: Aguila 505. Pawnshop for good buys in watches and jewelry.

ENRIQUE INDOWSKY: Calle Monserrate in Colon Market. *Milagros*, old jewelry. Cheap.

IRON MARKET: A square block of pushcarts next to Mercado Unico. Door knockers, hinges, keys, other decorative bits. Cheap. No English spoken.

LAZO DE ORO: Manzana de Gomez arcade. Perfumes, Panama hats, novelties.

DR. LORIE'S AMERICAN DRUG STORE: Prado at Virtudes. Cuban perfumes and toilet waters. American drugs sold here. Medium-priced.

MANZANA DE GOMEZ: A block-square arcade of shops on Calle Zulueta. Linens, Panama hats, toys, Cuban mahogany, *jai-alai* mitts. Most of the shops are moderately priced.

MERCADO COLON: Calles Animas, Zulueta and Trocadero. Canned foods, shell and seed-pod jewelry, *alpargatas*, *chancletas*, tiles, *guayaberas*, pottery casseroles, old brass, bronze and iron, *milagros* and a hundred other items. Extremely cheap.

LA MIA: Zanja 422 or Compostela 464. A chain

of grocery stores like our own A & P. Canned Cuban fruits, groceries, liquors. Cheap.

MONSERRATE FERRETERIA: Calle O'Reilly at Zayas Park. Large stock of native china, kitchenware, hardware. The place for pottery casseroles, spun-aluminum ramekins or those double wire baskets used for making *huevos al nido*. Medium-priced. English not spoken.

IGNACIO MUSCATI: Zulueta 123, in Mercado Colon. Seed-pod and shell jewelry, raffia bags and baskets. Cheap.

CASA OSCAR: San Rafael 213. Fine tailor for made-to-order linen suits.

CASA DEL PERRO: Neptuno 38. Everything and anything of alligator skin. Medium-priced.

CASA PILAR: Virtudes 206. *Rumba* costumes for men and women. Medium-priced. English not spoken.

PRADO 86: Liquors, cigars, novelties. Medium-priced.

LOS PRECIOS FIJOS: Calle Reina, corner of Aguila. Linens, children's clothes. Inexpensive.

CASA QUINTANA: Avenida Italia 358. The finest watches, precious jewelry, objets d'art. Expensive.

KATHARINE RANDOLPH: Prado 314. Fine couturière. Expensive.

EL RAS: Zanja 272. Second-hand store crammed with bargains in china, glass, bric-à-brac, tiles, brass and bronze. English not spoken. Extremely cheap.

ALFONSO RODRIGUEZ: Calle Animas in Mercado

Colon. *Milagros*, old jewelry. Cheap. English not spoken.

HELENE SIMÓN: Avenida Maceo, 617. Distinctive custom-made hats. Medium-priced.

SNIDER'S: Prado 251. Antique jewelry, guns, old china, glass, paintings, tortoise shell and bibelots. Very expensive.

EL SOL: Manzana de Gomez 309. Men's clothes, ready-made. Moderately priced.

JOSÉ A. SOLIS: Progreso 219. Manufacturer of seed-pod and shell jewelry. Cheap.

CASA TARIN: O'Reilly 517. Beautifully made, professional *jai-alai* mitts.

LA TINAJA: Calle Galiano at the corner of Lagunas. Pottery shop for lamp bases, vases, figures, wall plaques, wonderful casseroles. Very cheap.

LOS TRES HERMANOS: Consulado 160. Precious and antique jewelry, magnificent silver plate, paintings, tiles. Expensive.

LE TRIANON: Avenida Italia 405. Jewelry and watches, moderately priced.

VEGA HERMANAS: San Rafael 361. A whole store devoted to fine clothes for babies and children. Medium-priced.

VIUDA DE CARRERAS: Paseo de Marti 563. Drums, cow-bells and other Cuban musical instruments. Also sheet music and records. Moderate in price.

WOOLWORTH'S: Calle Galiano, opposite El Encanto. The good old Five-and-Ten has shell jewelry and small Cuban souvenirs at lower prices than elsewhere.



## *Country Cousins*

ONCE in Havana, every poster, folder or pamphlet issued by the Tourist Commission and travel agencies reminds you that "Havana is not all of Cuba." "Visit the interior of the island," they implore. "Drive through the countryside, see the old cities, discover the picturesque qualities of the Cuban villages," they urge. This is one time when the advertisements don't lie. You don't know Cuba if you have confined your sightseeing to Havana. Havana always will remain our favorite, but we must break down and admit that it is no more Cuba than New York City is the United States. It is the largest, most cosmopolitan, certainly the most exciting city, but it isn't typical of the country.

As soon as you leave Havana, even if only to visit one of the towns across the bay, you step back into the nineteenth century, into a slower, less



mechanized way of life. The architectural beauty of the older cities, the natural beauty of the landscape, is a source of delight; so is the quiet charm of the countrywomen and the innate dignity of even the simplest *guajiro* (peasant). You will find the natives rooted to the land, loyal to old ways and customs, gentle and courteous. You will be touched by the hospitality lavished upon you; foreigners are warmly received in the smaller towns where *turistas* are a rarity and, consequently, more of an event.

Even if your time in Cuba is limited, try to manage at least one trip outside the Capital. There are plenty of near-by places for short excursions. This is not a survey of the principal cities of Cuba. We try to give a capsule picture of some of the spots to which we were attracted, but there are others to be discovered for yourself. If, after reading our list, you hunger for more, the Tourist Commission will be delighted to plan trips, arrange itineraries and make itself generally useful.

REGLA, just across the bay from Havana, is reached by a ten-minute ferry ride that costs five cents, round trip. Go for dinner some evening, so that you can visit the Mexico Bar on the main street, a minute's walk from the square by the ferry. A piquant combination of colorful Mexican murals and Cuban flag by the yard stretched across the ceiling decorates this huge place, fully a block long, boasting, by the way, the only *reservados* we

have seen complete with victrolas and wash-basins! Mexican food is served, and the Mexican music and dancing may prove a welcome antidote to an overdose of *rumbas* and *congas*.

Walk up this street to the Plaza Facciolo, around which the town is built in typically Spanish style. The large building fronting the square on the right is the Palacio Municipal, a combination city hall, police station and town hospital. Officers in charge are glad to take you on a tour of inspection. When we were there in January we noticed the building was strung with highly colored lights. Inquiry (we hoped preparations for a *fiesta* might be in progress) brought forth the information that they had been hung for the previous 4th of September celebration. Nobody had ever remembered to take them down—a commentary on the why-bother outlook of the Cubans.

Walking through the streets on Saturday or Sunday night, you will catch glimpses of family life through the open door-like windows: young ladies and their *caballeros* romancing in the front parlor with Mamma in a near-by chair, pretending to doze but keeping a sharp eye out to see that conventions are observed. In the square toward dusk, the traditional promenades take place: girls walking clockwise in pairs or with a *dueña*; young bloods walking counter-clockwise, trying to win a smile or gesture from the *señoritas* they admire. As in all warm countries, the life of the people is lived on the streets; so just walking about of an evening and

watching what goes on gives you an orchestra seat at a comedy of manners.

GUANABACOA is a small city, twenty minutes by car or bus (five cents) from Havana. Once a fashionable summer resort for wealthy Cubans, now only a vestige of its former elegance remains. You will be struck by the colonial atmosphere preserved in the older homes (really palaces), the narrow streets, barred windows and wall-niches for figures of St. Anthony who helps out lovers in distress. Visit the Church of San Francisco, with its charming monastic patio and centuries-old statue of Our Lady of the Assumption, patron saint of the city, and the Convent of Saint Anthony, with cloisters of beautifully carved mahogany. On the Hill of the Indian (*Loma del Indio*) at the outskirts of the city are fragrant gardens and mineral springs discovered by the Siboneys and still in use today for medicinal purposes. Stop at the little café, *El 20 de Mayo*, flanking the Parque Central, for the town's specialty, *papas rellenas*. Mashed potatoes molded into balls are stuffed with savory hamburger and fried in deep fat. Delicious if hot; so ask for yours *caliente*. A favorite drive for *Habaneros* on warm evenings is over to Guanabacoa just to eat *papas rellenas*.

Towns like these are most fun to visit on Saints' Days or at Carnival time if you are lucky enough to be in the vicinity then. We saw Guanabacoa during the fiesta in honor of Our Lady of the As-

sumption in August. During the day, processions bearing elaborately costumed figures of *La Tutelar* wound through the streets to the churches where solemn Masses were said. Flowers decorated all homes, families wore their Sunday-go-to-meeting best and threw wide their doors and windows to make sure the world saw they were doing homage. At night the town turned into a gigantic street fair. Enormous roulette wheels, bird cages, every imaginable variety of gambling device, moved right out into the streets, so that any sort of traffic was an impossibility. At hastily erected stalls, vendors whacked slices from hanging carcasses of *lechón asado* for hungry customers, candy and *fritas* peddlers milled through the crowds, bands blared out at every corner, and flaring torches lighted the streets, giving a final François Villon touch to a scene that might have come straight from the Middle Ages. The traditional ball, *La Mazucamba*, was held in the town's opera house with four orchestras providing continuous music, and the participants going wild in an orgy beyond anything ever seen in Havana. Evidently the natives felt that, having paid their religious obligations during the day, they were entitled to relax and have some fun during the night.

BATABANO is the mecca for deep-sea fishing. It is a little village about two hours south of Havana that is also the headquarters for the sponge-fishing fleets which operate in the Gulf of Mexico.

If your objective at Batabano is sightseeing, go by bus as the natives do. Take the Number 4 bus (fare is five cents) from Havana to Vibora (a suburb) trolley terminal station, where you connect with the bus to Batabano (twenty-five cents each way). Buses leave every half hour. The Vibora-Batabano run takes an hour and a half; that is, if nothing goes wrong. On one memorable ride down, the fan belt broke and we had two flat tires! We didn't mind too much though; the countryside is pleasantly rolling and we had the chance to get out and inspect the fields of sugar cane and pineapple at close hand. The drivers of these *guaguas* know the occupants of every *bohío* along the road and seem to collect tribute from each. A fat chicken was donated by one, ripe alligator pears by another; by the time we reached Batabano, the bus, loaded down with garden produce, resembled a truck going to market far more than a passenger vehicle. If you are thirsty, the driver will obligingly stop at a wayside stand for a bottle of pop. This gives the expedition a slight rowdiness; practically every passenger noisily gulps at a bottle as the bus jolts along.

Once in Batabano, walk down the main street (Calle Independencia) to the end of the pier and get a rowboat to take you out to one of the funny flat-bottomed sponge boats in the harbor. (Don't pay more than fifty cents for this ferry service.) The sponge fishermen are delighted to have visitors. Their work takes them hundreds of miles out into

the ocean, where they live for months at a time, seeing no one but shipmates; so tourists provide a welcome break in the monotony. After the ubiquitous black coffee, which you must drink, since it is the Cuban equivalent of breaking bread with the stranger, they will explain how they get the sponges, store and dry them, and take you on a tour of inspection, too.

*Safety first for women:* Don't wear high heels; these ships are weatherbeaten affairs with loose boards to trip the unwary. Living arrangements are primitive enough to suit the most Spartan tastes, but there was a domestic touch in the menage of cat, dog and three puppies that lived in harmony on a pile of sponges in one corner of the boat. Each boat carries some pets, and the dog is also watchman while the men are off the boat, fishing from the small rowboats suspended at the sides. Give your hosts the price of a drink, even though they don't expect pay for their courtesy.

Back on the pier, you might stop to inspect the carloads of raw mahogany awaiting shipment to the interior. It is hard to realize that this dull, reddish mass will emerge as the finely polished, warmly grained wood used so lavishly all through the Island. Or you might like to walk down to the factory where sponges are refined, or see the shipyards along the water's edge. Whatever you do, you will find the natives glad to take you around and answer all questions.

For lunch or dinner go to the world-famous old

Hotel Dos Hermanos. Its exterior is fairly unprepossessing, but the restaurant roof-garden, built completely of native woods exquisitely carved, with mosaic-tiled floors and gay stucco pots lush with trailing vines, should not be missed. The view of harbor and village from the rooftop is renowned, too, but Dos Hermanos' attractions aren't only aesthetic. The food is fine and the seafood is fresh from the ocean. The snapper, pompano, crab, lobster or swordfish you eat was caught only that morning. Fishing parties always stop at Dos Hermanos, giving the place a pleasant country-inn quality. Take the tall stories you hear with a grain of salt. The local favorite about the fisherman waiting until the lobsters go to sleep, then nabbing them by hand, for instance, is only a flight of fancy.

But the stories about record tarpon catches are gospel truth. Each year the crowd of rod-and-reel experts who come to Batabano increases, thanks to the efforts of a "man named Smith," well-known international big-game fisherman, who has enthusiastically spread the story of Batabano's all-year-round tarpon season, not found in any other part of the world. Where two strikes a day are fair average for Florida fishing, there is a chance for twenty strikes here. The great silver *sábalo* swim in schools of ten to fifty. Dead fish heaved overboard from commercial fishing boats draw them in. You fish from a rowboat, pulled out only a few hundred yards from shore and chum rather than troll. Landing your streamlined charge of dynamite

takes about twenty minutes, and it is better to let him go since the tarpon is not edible.

It isn't necessary to be in the millionaire class to enjoy the thrill of a big-game fishing expedition at Batabano. Tackle and boat cost only about \$7.00 a day, which includes guide service and transportation. To arrange for your expedition get in touch with "Go" Smith at the Havana Electric Railway Company.

Batabano is also the embarkation point for boats to the Isle of Pines, an overnight trip. This is a favorite resort with Americans who have built the large winter colony at *Nueva Gerona*. Cuba's own Alcatraz is here too, a model prison that does splendid work in re-educating and reclaiming its inmates. Permission can be obtained to visit the prison, if you are interested.

CEIBA DEL AGUA: A little village, noted as the home of a really unique Cuban sociological experiment, conducted on a lavish scale, the Instituto Cívico Militar. Founded by Batista about four years ago, it is supported in royal style by four per cent of the take on the national lottery. The Instituto is twenty-seven miles west of Havana, an hour's trip by bus Number 48. No pass is required from tourists, the school being open daily until six for inspection.

Cívico Militar's purpose is to educate the children of fathers who perished through accident, and to fit them for life by training them in the work for



which they show most aptitude. Students include boys and girls of six to eighteen years, selected after application by the mothers.

You have to see this place to believe it. Instituto Cívico Militar is really a small city, complete and self-sustaining. A great far-flung group of white stone buildings, surrounded by beautifully tended lawns, covers an area of one hundred city blocks. The main building houses the library, natural history museum and modern theater, as well as the administration offices. A gigantic *Ceiba* tree, about two hundred and fifty years old, serenely standing guard in the flower-filled patio, looks out over the exercise field with its tremendous swimming pool. Parallel to the main building are smaller ones that house all the trade schools. Ironwork, shoe-making, farming, drug manufacture, beauty culture, printing, machinery repair and even the culture of silk worms are studied. In addition to domestic-science courses, there is a fine-arts school which maintains a choral group of two hundred that has sung in almost every Pan-American republic.

Everything produced in the work-shops is consumed right at the Instituto. Fruits and vegetables raised on the premises are canned, bread made, poultry cultivated; even the uniforms of the students are manufactured here. The dining room is tremendous, large enough to hold the more than 1,000 students at one sitting. Its kitchens are models, with elaborate electric time-saving machines. The dormitories themselves are a small commu-

nity, and each one devotes one large room to a club for students. Cubans get the club habit early in life.

You will be awed by the size of the Instituto; you will come away remembering the healthy happy faces; you will be impressed by the progress of this great experiment with children who normally would never get a chance. And all this in a country Americans consider backward!

CUEVAS DEL CURA: All Havana is excited over the new caves which will soon be open to the public. Their existence has been known for some time, and their accessibility makes them an hour's easy trip from Havana by the Santa Cruz del Norte bus (fare, fifteen cents). Entrance fee will be \$1.00. To date, the caves have been explored for only about a half mile, the extent to which they are passable now, but visiting geologists expect them to outdo the Mammoth Caves of Kentucky.

Twenty miles from Havana are the caves, at the *Finca Pache* outside the colorful little town of Tapaste. The entrance is a wide tunnel overhung by rocks, the approach heavily tangled in tropical undergrowth. Stepping inside, and down the entrance corridor, you walk into the realization of Dante's *Divine Comedy*; there you behold great silent chambers like the nave of a cathedral, dripping with crystal and silver; halls so vast that they make anything above a whisper seem sacrilegious. The caves take their name from an old legend which claims

that a curate went exploring there one day, never to return, but his spirit still lingers on.

From the cave site, you get a breathtaking view of the Jaruco Valley. To one side, the buildings of Havana, gilded in the sun, then a free sweep of valley so clearly seen that it is almost like a view from a plane. On the other side of this "Balcony of Havana" are the smokestacks of Hershey (the sugar mills owned by the American chocolate company). The famous *Escaleras de Jaruco* (ladders of Jaruco) lend a dramatic touch to the whole scene.

There are great plans afoot for the caves. Lighting effects are being designed by Fernando Tarrazona, one of Cuba's foremost artists, and for the tourist's diversion there will be swimming pools, lounges and a restaurant in the adjacent valley. To cap the climax, in the central chamber of the caves, there will be a bar. Will they serve a "Stalactite Special"?

MATANZAS, the nearest large city to Havana, is a two-hour trip via bus (\$1.50 round trip) or car, along the famous Central Highway that stretches from one end of the Island to the other. Don't be too surprised when this much-vaunted artery turns out to be a two-lane concrete road sorely in need of repair. We had had visions of a six-lane express highway, with center safety islands; so the reality was something of a shock, but since the only traffic you encounter is an occasional bus or *guajiro's* cart, driving is at a merry clip. The scenery is verdant

and eye-filling, and you can take time out to inspect some of the little villages along the way.

Color is what you will remember of the Cuban countryside; the country people have a flair for using brilliant hues around their abodes in a manner that aids and abets Nature's not inconsiderable efforts. Overhead the laurel trees meet in an unending cool arch of green; tall palms rear their feather-duster heads proudly. Bougainvillea shrubs cling tenaciously to doorways and old fences; everywhere one looks the "golden shower" vine cascades in a dazzle of orange. There are flowering white jasmine with tiny star-shaped blossoms, trumpet vine, pink-flowered oleander and hedges of vibrant red *mar pacífico* flaming along the roadside. The brilliance of the landscape must put village homes on their mettle. Even the humblest palm-thatched *bohío* is filled with tins of vines and blooms hanging on walls, festooned over doorways and windows, fastened wherever possible. Equal to their love of color is the country people's fetish for plants. Simple cottages have their setting in the center of carefully tended gardens thick with shamrocky Japanese grass, luxuriantly abloom.

The machine age has touched the *bohíos*, you will note with surprise on hearing the radio blare forth from these primitive huts. And every now and then a gleaming car will be parked near by. Not that tenants of *bohíos* drive eight-cylinder automobiles, but some of their friends or family seem to own one occasionally. As a matter of fact, radios,

automobiles and electric refrigerators are the outward manifestation of Cuban prosperity. They are the first purchases a native makes when he gets some money—often actual necessities will be forgone in favor of these coveted American wonders.

Notice the clothes of the country people, the highly starched, tightly fitting *guayaberas* of the men, the bright frocks of the women. Vivid shades are chosen and pastels barred because, the story goes, colors like green or white blend too easily with the surrounding landscape. Vigilant Mamma finds it easier to keep track of straying daughter's doings when she wears red or purple!

Matanzas everywhere proclaims its antiquity. The city is hilly, and the narrow, winding streets, weather-stained houses, high windows barred in grilled iron, give it a Spanish rather than tropical feeling. Of course you must visit the old Monserrate Hermitage beneath whose summit stretches a dream-like panorama of tropical fertility, the Yumuri Valley. This vast natural amphitheater, about six miles in diameter, boasts one of the four echoes in the world that repeats the last three syllables you shout, instead of just two. Monserrate Church is worth a look too. The altar made of cork, Oriental rugs on the floor, white-washed walls, lace anti-macassars on the altar chairs, and an azure ceiling liberally sprinkled with stars, lend a cozy, home-like effect. Notice, too, the large cases on the walls, filled with *milagros* donated by the faithful, and a

couple of superb religious paintings by Murillo, curiously out of place in this simple structure.

Stop at the Gran Hotel Velasco facing the Plaza de la Libertad for a drink and see the Casino Español, next door, with its beautiful marble floor, mahogany pillars and lush patio. It is an old mansion turned into the club no Cuban could live without. The Plaza is the city's main square; so naturally the twilight promenades take place here. You will be rewarded if you join one; Matanzas women are considered the most beautiful in Cuba and a foreigner has the privilege of speaking to them. It is a courtesy accorded the stranger that is forbidden local talent!

On the other side of the city is the Bay of Matanzas, as beautiful as Havana's, and Matanzas' own Malecón, which isn't. There's no beach; so, with a charming lack of self-consciousness, everyone goes swimming right off the sidewalk while traffic whirls by. There is Versailles, the fine residential section, to admire, and the immense subterranean Bellamar Caves, if you crave stalactites and stalagmites. The Gran Hotel Paris on Calzada de Tirry is the place for lunch or dinner, but don't expect your meal to be inexpensive. The management knows the value of its delicious *criolla* cooking.

SAN MIGUEL DE LOS BAÑOS is twenty minutes past Matanzas on the same Central Highway, a popular resort where Cubans spend the summer

drinking the sulphurous mineral waters and indulging in an amazingly active social life. Main sight of the village is the hotel, the *Balneario de San Miguel*, all marble and mahogany, mosaic domes and cupolas, as pretentious as anything one would find on the Riviera and delightfully incongruous in this simple little town. The springs, inclosed in ornate tiled summer houses, take the place of a village post-office, since a several-times-daily trek springward to drink the waters is part of everyone's routine. This is where you loiter to hear the latest scandal, inspect the new arrivals or meet your friends. The unending, glass-in-hand procession never fails to amuse. There are horseback riding, tennis and swimming in the hotel's pool. Many Cuban families take houses for the entire season.

By the way, there are several other mineral springs throughout the Island whose curative properties are only just beginning to be realized. Cubans have spas whose waters can cure practically every ill to which the flesh is heir. Santa Maria del Rosario and Madruga are others within easy reach of Havana.

CARDENAS: Turning off the Central Highway at Coliseo you come to Cardenas, an important seaport on the northern coast of Cuba and a large manufacturing center to boot. As foyer for the resort of Varadero it is of interest to visitors, but it deserves attention in its own right. There is a mellow, aged air about the streets. A church of great

antiquity fronts Plaza Colon. Cardenas has also one of the finest museums in the country, and handsome homes and gardens to inspect. In Parque Colon the Cuban insistence on comfort manifests itself in the form of iron rocking-chairs, placed along the paths for the *Cardenenses*, instead of benches. At dusk, when the citizenry takes its pre-dinner constitutional, a hundred rockers going full tilt at the same time, each to an individual rhythm, provide a dizzy sight. The old horse-drawn coaches are still used in Cardenas; the animals are gay in bright trappings and bells. It is a happy escape from the raucous cacophony that jars the ear in Havana.

VARADERO: Turn left at the first traffic light in Cardenas and drive for about ten miles to arrive at what we honestly consider the most beautiful beach in the Western Hemisphere. Five miles of iridescent white sand, soft as talcum beneath bare feet, stretch along a shore lapped by limpid blue water whose constantly shifting tones offer enchantment. When Irenée duPont first saw Varadero he promptly bought up several hundred acres and developed a sumptuous estate, complete with private golf course, airplane landing field and yacht basin. Cubans decided that what was good enough for an American munitions magnate was probably good enough for them and descended on the place in hordes. Today it is the smartest resort in Cuba and *the* place to go for Holy Week or summer vacations. During the winter, Varadero is peaceful and



relaxing, a perfect haven for a quiet holiday of sunning, swimming, fishing and outdoor sports. Cubans, you see, wouldn't dream of going to a beach during the winter, any more than they would think of wearing summer clothes in January and February. So the place is left to *locos Americanos* who like to swim when it is hot, despite the calendar. Americans love it. They fly over from Florida for a taste of Beach, Spanish Style, drive down from Havana over week-ends (three hours) and shout its praises when they return home.

When the Cubans open their homes, and the hotels begin to fill up with natives, however, much more goes on. Regattas and competitions, balls and *verbenas* make for the traditional giddy whirl. Regatta week-end, some time in August, is the climax of the season, when all the yacht clubs throughout the Island send their crews to compete for the National Championship. Even the Cuban Navy (two gunboats) goes down to see the fun. There is an enormous ball at the Nautico Club (Varadero's own yacht club) the night before the races, and practically all of Havana seems to be present. When we attended, there was such a crush that the club's wooden floor cracked wide open under the combined weight of the dancers! This is the one time when Cubans relax their rule of sports-clothes-only in Varadero, the women appearing in dance frocks while the men are beautiful in immaculate white linens.

We left at three in the morning while Cuban

friends raised eyebrows at our premature desertion. At eight A.M., when we reappeared to watch the races from the club's broad verandas, it seemed as though no one had gone home at all! If we had not noticed the difference of clothes, we would never have believed they had. The presentation dance, when the much-coveted trophy is awarded the winner, takes place at the club the night of the races and is notable mainly for the speeches, to which no one pays any attention.

There are hotels for every taste here. Since most of your activity centers around the place you stay, they are all run on the American plan. Most of them face the water and have their own beaches, so that swimming can be a simple bedroom-to-ocean matter. The Nautico Club, which has recently opened its doors to American tourists (Cubans must be members in order to use club facilities), is our favorite, for it is the hub of community social life. Kawama Beach Club, at the lower end of the resort, where it juts out into the sea, is the chic resort. A group of stucco *cabañas* cluster around the two central buildings (the dining hall and bar). Tennis, horseback riding and archery are among the sports guests can enjoy. Kawama is expensive, however, and reservations usually depend upon the personal whim of the owner. So if you are planning to stay there, be sure the management confirms your reservation. Another favored spot is Playa Azul, which to us looked strangely like the Cuban version of a New England summer hotel. A large

wooden house trimmed with the same ornamental wooden fret-work worn so proudly by the Victorian mansions at Saratoga, it is filled with antimacassars and crayon portraits, but the food is fine and the rooms comfortable. Casa La Rosa and Miramar are alternate choices.

There is too much gingerbread on most of the buildings at Varadero to suit us. It is unfortunate that the fine free beauty of the beach should be spoiled by such cluttered-up architecture. The homes now being built by wealthy Cubans, however, are handsome structures with flowing modern lines that become a coherent part of the landscape. Some day, we hope, a smart entrepreneur will erect a resort hotel that really exploits Varadero's possibilities properly. Meanwhile, the beach is what counts here, and the beach is superb.

**PINAR DEL RIO PROVINCE:** If you have enjoyed skimming the surface with two- and three-hour jaunts outside Havana, you should take a whole day off really to appreciate the Cuban countryside. Six hours will be all you need for an automobile expedition into Pinar del Rio Province, where the best tobacco in the world grows. Leaving the city, you follow the Central Highway to the west, past little *bohíos* in dazzling *bandera* blue, the toned-down cobalt shade that for us symbolizes the Cuban countryside as much as does green. Cuban drivers are a friendly brotherhood, you will find. The road hog, all too prevalent on U.S.A. highways, is con-

spicuous by his absence. In fact, the driving fraternity even has a set of signals with which to warn fellow-motorists of lurking danger. Don't be surprised to see an approaching driver violently blinking his lights in broad daylight. He is merely tipping you off to the motorcycle cop hiding in near-by bushes, on the watch for 'speed demons. Acknowledge the courtesy with an answering flash of your lights, and do the same for the next car you pass.

There are several stops to make along the way. If you are agriculture-minded, see the big model dairy farm maintained by Ward and Company, situated between Caimito and Guanajay. It is due principally to this organization that Havana today enjoys the cream, butter and excellent milk so hard to obtain twenty years ago. At the *Cremeria Ward*, the main attraction is a columned, circular edifice, open on all sides, which would definitely put Elsie's (the Borden Cow) nose out of joint. It is a shrine dedicated to her Cuban cousin. A highflown sentiment, TO THE NOURISHING MOTHER OF THE WORLD —THE COW. SHE BRINGS US HEALTH AND HAPPINESS, is inscribed in large gold letters across the façade. Tables are placed within the pavilion where visitors can order ice-cream or milk. Other things to see are the milking sessions when Bossie gives her all by machinery, the pedigreed bulls and the huge prize porkers. The entire plant is shining and spotless, object lesson for those Milquetoasts who have worried about the purity of Havana's dairy products.

A few minutes farther on the Central Highway is Guanajay, interesting because it is such a typical, outside-of-Havana town, centered on the usual small park with the inevitable bandstand. There is the customary over-supply of crowded *cantinas*, *bodegas*, block after block of *habitaciones*, presenting blank white stone faces, broken by thick wooden studded doors, shops piled high with cheap finery. Because Cubans love to dawdle when taking *refrescos* (drinks), there are always many too many refreshment stands. In Guanajay there's an ice-cream parlor called "The Scandal"—but the ice-cream was fine!

We stopped here to watch the religious procession of *Santo Entierro* on Good Friday. Mr. and Mrs. Guanajay had turned out in gala style. The little park was packed with hundreds of people, every doorway was jammed, ragamuffins darted through the crowds and the cake vendors did a brisk trade in thickly iced confections. To a solemn drum beat the procession advanced. First the choir boys in purple and black vestments, carrying tall silver psalters, then Mary Magdalene in life-sized effigy, robed in scarlet and green velvet, borne aloft by four girls dressed in white. Next came the Holy Mother's image in rich black velvet; finally a representation of Jesus in the Sepulcher, decorated with purple satin, lace and flowers. Hundreds followed in the procession's wake, many with lighted tapers that created a dancing, firefly effect.

We waited for the crowds to clear, then went on, impressed again by the piety of the Cuban masses, their closeness to religion—the human-interest side of the ritual.

MARIEL: Turn right off the Central Highway at Guanajay, and the winding road takes you directly to Mariel, site of Cuba's Naval Academy, which commands the summit of a steep hill and rewards the visitor with an inspiring view of the surrounding country and bay. In clear weather you can even see the buildings of Havana, thirty-two miles to the east. The castle-like fortress that houses the Academy was originally built as a gambling casino, but the roulette wheels have disappeared now! The officer in charge will be delighted to let you inspect the buildings and grounds; as a matter of fact, you will have a hard time avoiding an examination of every nook and cranny. When Cubans show visitors around, they are determined that nothing be overlooked, that you test every bed in every dormitory, admire each gun in its gun case, see every detail of the arrangements. Our guide was heartbroken because the cadets' wardrobes were locked since the boys were on vacation, and he could not display the piles of underwear and uniforms within.

At the foot of the hill is the town itself. There is a pleasant inn, the Villa Martin, that overlooks the bay at the water's edge. We can recommend their seafood. Boats can be hired from the inn and fishing is good in the land-locked bay.

SAN DIEGO DE LOS BAÑOS is another little side-trip off the Central Highway, turning right at Paso Real. The tiny village is famous for its mineral baths. Sufferers from rheumatism, arthritis and kindred diseases claim that these malodorous springs work miracles, but the turgid bubbling waters convinced us that we would rather be sick than have to resort to such a cure! The baths are interesting to see, though. Built underground, with stark white-washed walls, they look like the catacombs of the ancient Romans, and you feel as though you were in a surrealist painting as you wander through the maze. The best hotel in town is the hundred-year-old Cabarrouy, an antiquated rambling structure with rooms opening off a cool, shaded patio. We would hardly suggest a stay in San Diego unless a rest cure has been recommended. Accommodations are too primitive for our idea of comfort, and there is nothing to do but bathe in the waters, walk or go horseback riding.

You should stop, too, to see Viñales Valley, about fifteen miles north of Pinar del Rio City, one of Cuba's famous pictorial views, with looming hills and abrupt canyons, strange geologic formations called *mogotes* (hillocks) and narrow trails winding behind the vertical cliffs of the Organo Mountains. The platform from which you admire the scene was erected by the Rotarians of Pinar del Rio who ask that you leave an offering for the *Asilo de Ancianos* (old folks' home) of the city. When you do,

the guardians of the place give you a printed poem about generosity, as your receipt.

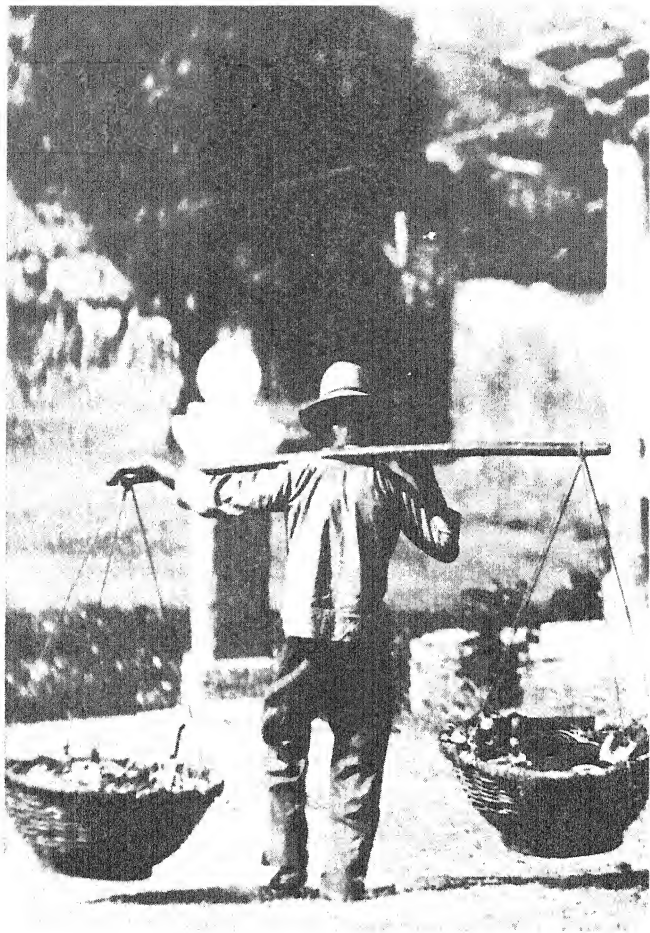
PINAR DEL RIO CITY, the capital of the province, is notable mostly for the Hotel Ricardo, open to the street on three sides, with such lofty ceilings that birds fly airily through the main-floor dining room! Food and accommodations are excellent because tobacco buyers from all parts of the world make the Ricardo their headquarters while they are buying the annual crops from the farmers of the surrounding countryside. Pinar del Rio Province tobacco is the best money can buy, and if you visit the experimental station at *San Juan y Martinez*, just a few minutes drive beyond the city, you will understand the reason. The *Estación Experimental del Tabaco*, to give it its formal name, is run by an ardent young technician, Ramon Perez, who conceived the original idea four years ago. This purely non-profit-making organization grows tobacco under various soil and weather conditions to determine the best methods of raising uniformly fine crops. The tobacco is dried, stored and graded under similar testing conditions. All findings are free to the farmers of the province. In addition, the station offers other free services; it puts any tobacco under consideration through the seventeen different chemical tests necessary to judge quality absolutely, and gathers seed from the finest plants for next year's crops. A weather bureau is maintained to warn farmers of sudden changes in temperature and atmosphere.





FRANCESCO ENRIQUEZ

ITINERANT COFFEE VENDORS



A BALANCED DIET FOR CUBANS

It is fascinating to see a tobacco expert at work. To judge a bunch that is drying, the senses of touch, sight and smell must be properly cultivated. Your expert places the bunch between his knees, then carefully smooths out each individual leaf. Color and uniform elasticity count here. Next, he chooses one leaf, wraps it around a cigar, and smokes it slowly, noting the evenness with which it burns and the color of the ash. Tobacco buyers are highly trained and highly paid. After all, one mistake in selection might mean the difference between black or red figures on the firm's ledgers the following year.

The tobacco buyer who guided us through the station told us that Havana cigars contain less nicotine than any other, which is one reason for their popularity and a salve to the conscience of chain smokers. He gave us some of his own rules for smoking with maximum pleasure. We pass them on for your information:

1. Light the cigar slowly and without smoking. Then smoke it slowly so that it won't burn too quickly. Thus you get the maximum of aroma.
2. Try to keep part of the ash on the cigar. It helps the flavor and fragrance.
3. Don't let your cigar go out. If it does, don't let it grow cold. Otherwise, on relighting, you will find the flavor changed and the cigar much stronger.
4. Don't smoke a cigar in a high wind. It makes the tobacco strong and disagreeable.

The American Land and Leaf Tobacco Company owns large plantations (*vegas*) all around San Juan; if you want to see tobacco grown, cut and dried on a large scale, permission is easily obtained.

SANTIAGO DE CUBA: Seven hundred and thirty miles east of Havana, thousands of miles away in character, is Santiago, the second largest city in Cuba. Please visit Santiago if you have the time; it is a study in contrasts few other places can offer. By train (\$10.20 round trip) or bus (\$6.95), it is a full day's trip, but by far the best way is to fly down on one of the *Compañía Nacional Cubana Aviación's* planes (\$54.00 round trip) which cuts traveling time down to four hours and provides a view of the whole country that is impossible to get in any other way. The planes are comfortable sixteen-passenger affairs and the co-pilots, who also act as stewards, are most amiable about dispensing information. *Cubana Aviación* must make good-looks one of the prime requisites for its pilots; they are the most handsome group of young men in Cuba, an opinion to which the natives evidently subscribe. On one occasion our pilot was embarrassed beyond speech to find a basket heaped with gardenias waiting for him at the airport—tribute from a feminine admirer!

The landscape is flat until Camaguey, half way between Santiago and Havana; then you discover with a shock that Cuba is mountainous. The Sierra Maestra Mountains that stretch down to the east-

ern tip of the country were originally a continuation of the South American ranges, truly majestic in their beauty. By the way, Camaguey itself, one of the oldest cities in the country, and the center of the Cuban cattle industry, will reward sightseeing. The Hotel Camaguey, in Colonial times a cavalry and infantry barracks, occupying, with its numerous patios, nearly five acres, is the place to stay. Should you wish, *Cubana Aviación* will be glad to arrange stop-overs.

Because Santiago's climate is about ten degrees hotter than Havana's and because over half the population is Negro, the tempo of life is slower and the city is quiet, with none of the roaring urgency that characterizes the capital. After ten at night all activity ceases; outside of a few waterfront dives frequented only by Negroes, night life is notable for its absence. Judging from appearances, the most important pastime is rocking. Wherever you go, in hotel lobbies, private homes or clubs, all rockers are worked to and fro with all the vigor the occupants can command. Interest in politics is intense; the first question most residents ask visitors always concerns governmental news from Havana. They are pretty bitter about politics, too. Oriente, as the richest province, feels that too much revenue is diverted to Havana, never to return, not even in the form of civic improvements. For, unfortunately, Santiago, in architecture and landscape the most picturesque city on the Island, needs such mundane facilities as adequate lighting and modern

plumbing before she can properly take her place as the second city in Cuba.

Stretching up the mountainside from the bay, the city is almost Moorish in feeling. Weather-beaten houses of pink, green, lavender or blue have windows with latticed blinds in Arabic fashion and charming irregularities in floor levels due to the sloping streets. Many of them slope so sharply that from the roof of one house you can even look into your neighbor's ground-floor living room! All addresses are given *alta* or *baja*, to designate upper or lower streets, and the famous Calle Padre Pico is so steep it had to be built in steps, so that pedestrians can walk up and down without undue heart palpitations.

Scenery is what Santiago has to offer, and you will exclaim over the breathtaking views from the minute the plane circles the city, nestled between bay and mountains, until the time you drive to Puerto Boniato to see the vistas from its heights. Scenically, Oriente Province is far superior to the rest of the country. The harbor, mountains and lush tropical foliage give it a beauty with which Havana, for all its sophisticated charm, cannot compete.

There is ample sightseeing, too, since this part of Cuba was the principal center of activities during the Spanish-American War and the city is plastered with monuments and statues. Mere history-book names suddenly come to life when you visit El Caney, where the slaughter of the Span-

iards took place, or San Juan Hill, now a park on the outskirts of Viste Alegre, the smart residential section. Siboney, a half hour's drive from town, where the American forces landed, is now a bathing resort. The Siboney Beach Club, snuggled at the foot of sharply ascending mountains, where you can lunch and swim, makes sightseeing more a pleasure trip than an educational tour.

Another such dual-purpose spot is Ciudad Mar, a little suburb at the tip of the peninsula, center of social life because of the beach club, as ornate as any in Havana. There is no beach, but the water is protected, and practically all of Santiago comes here to swim. This is where Santiago's own grimly bastioned Morro Castle stands, guarding Punta Gorda, the bay and inlet. This is where camera fiends go into a delirium over the view of the bay, landlocked by the city spreading fanwise around it, with the stately Sierra Maestras in the background.

Every tourist must, as a matter of course, visit the Bacardi plant. Santiago is the home of Bacardi, the place where the rum you take back to the States is distilled. Lunch and drinks on the house are served all tourists who visit the plant. The building is enclosed in extensive gardens that contain a small-scale zoo with specimens of Cuba's wild life.

The Parque Cespedes in the middle of the city, as the center of community living, is the most animated spot in town. Here the bands play, the people take their evening constitutionals and vendors cry their wares. On its south side is the grim old

Cathedral, remarkable because its ground floor is about twenty feet above the plaza, on a level with the roofs of shops that surround two sides of it. When these were erected to bring additional revenues to the Church, they prompted the now famous remark that Christ drove the money changers from the Temple but Santiago brought them back! And it is truly a pity that they should be allowed to mar the grandeur of what otherwise would be one of the most impressive buildings in all of Cuba. Fully two blocks long, it is the only real cathedral on the Island, the others having been built originally as parish churches, and fine paintings, sculpture, precious gold and silver ornaments are housed there. Nevertheless, there is still a familiar touch in the spectacle of beggars taking naps in the corners of the immense edifice, even during services, in the little groups of people sitting and chatting on its steps at almost any hour of the day or night.

On the plaza's north rambles the *Casa Consistorial*, the City Hall, a long, low green stucco building that seems positively cozy after the austere magnificence of Havana's *alcaldía*. On the east looms the Casa Grande Hotel, the best Santiago offers. A one-time seignorial mansion, it has been modernized to the extent of electricity, plumbing and elevators, but that is about all. Rooms are enormous; ours contained two double and one single bed, all shrouded in ghostly mosquito netting, and there was enough extra space to do a *conga* with ease. Windows open to the floor onto little balconies, so



that you can sit and watch the parade in the square below. An amusing touch was the sign pinned to the wall, warning patrons not to throw lighted cigar butts out of the windows! Meals are taken on the broad veranda overlooking the square; it is pleasant, once you get over the feeling of being on display. There is no need to ask the telephone operator to call you in the morning at Casa Grande; the overpowering bells from the adjoining Cathedral wake you, willy-nilly. Besides, Santiago rises earlier than Havana. At six in the morning there is life in the streets; by seven business is in full swing. There is compensation for this, however; from June on, business closes down for the day at noon. Final warning: Don't be surprised, when you register at the hotel, to have the room clerk demand your age for the records. It is some sort of police requirement; so just wear a straight face and choose the age you prefer.

There are other hotels, but Casa Grande is really the most modern, and you would probably be uncomfortable elsewhere.

Eating in Santiago is preferable at the hotel, although there is a good restaurant, La Higuera, for typically Cuban food, and a road house, Rancho Club, about ten miles from town along the Central Highway, that serves the finest *langosta* and *flan* we had in Cuba. You should manage at least one dinner at Rancho Club. It is just an enormous *bohío*, open at the sides, situated on a high hill overlooking the city, so that the view at night is

admirable. This is the nearest thing to a night club that Santiago possesses; it is open later than any of the others, and there is dancing to juke-box music.

Since there is no night life, social activities center around the Country Club, which boasts an exceptionally good golf course, or the private homes. Go, by all means, if you are invited, to a home in Santiago. You will find it simpler, less pretentious than the Havana domicile, apt still to be furnished in old mahogany with cane pieces, highly colored religious paintings (homes in the poorer sections even paste portraits of Christ on the outside door) and *tinajones* on terraces, enormous earthenware pots originally used to hold rain-water, now planted with flowers and vines. As a concession to modern living, however, there is always an out-size electric refrigerator, usually occupying the place of honor in the dining room. There isn't too much to do, so Santiagoans devote even more time to eating than *Habaneros*. Meals are a leisurely procession of innumerable courses, and a siesta becomes a necessity after each one. *Criolla* cooking is epicurean, but on one occasion when friends invited us for dinner we were dismayed to find a typically American meal prepared in our honor. It couldn't have been more disappointing from the canned fruit cocktail, through the tough fried chicken to the soggy apple pie. Our hostess was so pleased with her thoughtfulness, though, we couldn't confess we really would have preferred her own excellent Cuban dishes.

Be sure to eat fresh *mangos* while you are in Santiago. Oriente Province is the home of the *mango*, and they are riper, sweeter and more succulent than elsewhere. Santiagoans make a rite of eating the *mango* and show you seriously how to choose the fruit, how they should be cut across the grain to get the full flavor, or tell you which varieties should be eaten whole. We liked *mango de corazón* the best, a tiny heart-shaped fruit that is the nearest you will come to ambrosia; but the *mango del Toledo* and *mango bizcochuelo* are almost as good.

La Francia and El Creacion are the best stores, but it would be wiser not to shop in Santiago unless you have to. Prices are high compared to Havana's, and there is never the assortment of merchandise to be found in the capital.

About twenty minutes from town, high in the mountains, is the tiny village of Puerto Boniato. There is nothing here but scenery, but that is of an extra-heady vintage. The tortuous, winding drive along the mountain's edge is reminiscent of the climb over the Andes to Caracas, while the view of Santiago, twenty miles away, with the bay and awe-inspiring mountains surrounding it, is so phenomenal that it dwarfs the much more publicized panoramas of Viñales and Yumuri. Drive up to the little *bohío-bodega* affair that serves visitors and sit on the back porch which hangs precariously over the mountain. For the price of a glass of cocoanut milk

(five cents) you can feast your eyes and dream of castles in Spain.

On the way back to the city, stop at the little town of Cobre (nine miles from Santiago) to see the shrine of the Virgin of Cobre which functions as a sort of Cuban Lourdes. The halt and the lame make pilgrimages here; crutches, braces and the like crowd the walls as testimonials to the Virgin's power to perform miracles. Her statue looks oddly like Queen Victoria—plump, smooth-haired, practically smothered in gold-embroidered brocades heavily ornamented with jewels. She sits on a massive silver pillar at whose base petitioners kneel and pray for favors, ardently kissing the hem of her robes the while. No valuables decorate the lower portion of her vestments, however. The priests have learned through bitter experience that high religious fervor never interfered with the supplicants' trying to make off with everything valuable within reach. On occasion the sacred robes have been kissed so heartily that jewels were bitten off them!

There are other excursions to be made: to Charco Mono, Santiago's reservoir; to Daiquiri, now better known as the birthplace of the *Daiquiri* cocktail than as the scene of decisive Spanish-American War battles; to the manganese mines about twenty miles south of Santiago, working to capacity as an important war-time industry. These are a fantastic sight at night when the entire mountain being mined is lighted with flaring torches. If you want to see what Uncle Sam is doing in the way of hemi-

sphere defense, you can drive down to Guantánamo, forty miles east of Santiago, now one of our most flourishing naval bases.

Only lack of space prevents us from listing all the captivating spots in Cuba. There are Cienfuegos on the shores of the Caribbean, with one of the finest natural harbors in the world; Trinidad, the oldest city on the Island, now being converted into a national shrine; Baracoa, the first capital of the country; countless towns and villages that provide entertainment for the visitor. Go as far as you can. Each place is individual and arresting, absorbingly different from the last. Each, in its own right, gives evidence of the agricultural, industrial and social versatility of the country; each is a new facet in the many-sided gem that is Cuba.



## What Makes the Wheels Go Round

So MUCH has been written about Cuba's sugar mills and tobacco plantations that most people haven't an inkling of the country's most flourishing national industry. It is charm! Even Dale Carnegie would be baffled by the scale on which it is produced. The Cubans could teach him a thing or two, for all of them, male or female, young or old, rich or poor, have so much charm that one can be lenient about their faults. Yes, charm is the national industry, all right. To be *simpático* is as natural and as necessary to a Cuban as breathing.

What is this charm? It is a blend of many qualities. An intense appreciation of the aesthetic is one of the chief elements. Cubans have a deep-rooted and genuine feeling for the beautiful. Everything from the dimple in a baby's elbow to a glorious sunset thrills them. A beautiful woman will be twice as

beautiful in Havana, where loveliness is so audibly and enthusiastically acknowledged. Especially are the Cubans moved by the beauties of Nature. They speak with feeling of the luxuriant countryside, the white brightness of the moon, the exquisite scent of the flowers.

The poetic impulse is reflected again in the picturesque phrases of everyday talk. Children are called "smiles of God," a negligee is a "jump-out-of-bed," popcorn blooms as "roses of corn," a station-wagon becomes a "step-and-run," and there are many such vocabulary inventions. Even the names of the shops show imagination at work. The main department store calls itself "The Enchantment"; "The Cuban Rose" romanticizes a dingy little grocery; a certain hardware store staggers along as "The Sun of America."

When Cubans utter endearments, they are endlessly resourceful. You can be called anything from *bandolera*, "little bandit," to *Santa de ojos bellos*, "Saint with beautiful eyes." Unlike Americans who do everything possible to hide a poetic strain, these people proudly indulge their love of imagery, and constantly make use of romance and oratory. Once, we were introduced to a muscular young sportsman. There we stood in a crowded lobby. He bowed over our hands, then straightened up. "Margarita! You said the name was Margarita!" he exclaimed delightedly. The one of us who was a Margarita nodded. "Margarita!" he beamed. "Dios!" And then he launched into a poem about *marga-*

*ritas* (daisies); the recitation lasted a full five minutes, complete with gestures. Finally, he bowed and walked away with no more self-consciousness than if he had muttered a perfunctory "howyababe."

As deep as his poetic streak is the Cuban's love for music. All day long, Havana echoes with song. In the morning you are awakened by the melodic cries of the chicken-seller, the vegetable hawker, the peddlers of coat hangers and the knife sharpeners. Each has his distinctive trade chant. In every café, no matter how small, there are a guitarist and singer; at night, on every corner, strolling musicians. Cubans are lyric-minded and their voices naturally have a cantabile quality. Their conversation runs in ripples and rills, and after a while, you will find the same cadence creeping into yours. When you call for the chamberman at the hotel, you don't say *Camarero*; you sing it. Cubans will burst into song at the slightest provocation, without a trace of bashfulness. They are surprised when you confess you can't warble a note. Once we even got a bitter complaint from our escorts: that we never sang to them on the way home. There is rhythm in their chromosomes; a rhythm that shows in everything, from the way the women walk to the way a little errand boy pats out *conga* beats on the box he is delivering.

Indeed, they are aesthetic. But the other side of the picture is earthy, robust, out-and-out Rabelaisian. Pick up a newspaper, and you will see what we mean. The woman in that political cartoon may



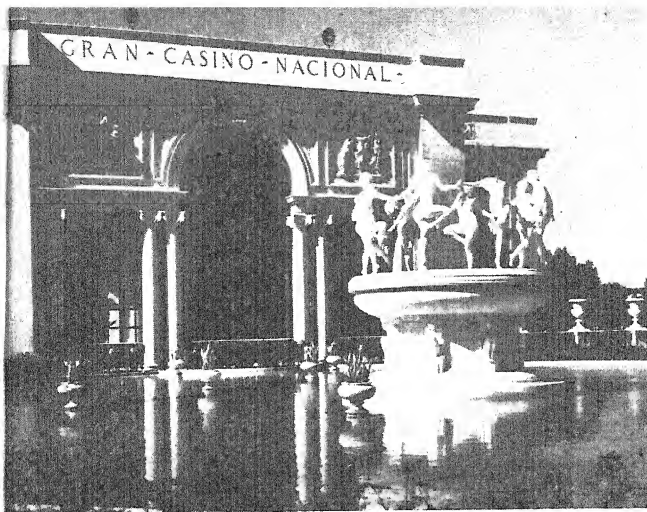
have nothing to do with the point of the story, but she will be drawn *female* in no uncertain terms. Nothing subtle or understated is good for a laugh; jokes are full-blown. There is the famous story of the pint-sized nobleman whose prankish friends stripped him down to his BVD's, stuck a big black cigar in his mouth and left him in the Benificencia turnstile one night, when he was far gone in his cups. Never a dull moment for the little Count! He inspired many of Havana's most elaborate practical jokes; in fact, we understand they even buried him once.

Humor of this type is what keeps the natives chuckling, which is interesting in view of the fact that the Cubans in so many other respects have attained a degree of sophistication that virtually borders on decadence. Cuban women make us seem like Girl Scouts; Cuban men make ours seem rather bucolic. They are a suave and worldly race; the girls are grown at twelve, married at sixteen. A young *caballero* starts maintaining his bachelor apartment as early in his teens as he can afford it.

*Habaneros* are walking contradictions. Perhaps that is what makes them so attractive. Interwoven with everyday common-sense are superstition and a morbid interest in the mystic. Sensible women warn you sincerely against the evils of night air or relate the incomprehensible things that can happen under a full moon. Even hard-headed businessmen will avoid appointments on days not considered propitious. And as for luck, lucky numbers are as vital

a part of Havana life as the daily newspaper. Friends meeting you at the pier may follow an effervescent greeting with "What was your stateroom number?" and then painstakingly comb the city to buy a lottery ticket including that number. To complicate matters even further, there is a double chance to be lucky; each number has its own related symbol; so that you have a good-luck insignia as well as a lucky number. Thus, if you dream of a death, you will play number eight, but if it should be an important death, say that of a statesman, then you will play number sixty-four, the number for the "big death" symbol. As in all places, including our own South, where there were African slaves, voodoo is prevalent and taken for granted among the Negroes, though the more sensational side of the *ñáñigo* cults was long ago subdued by the Government. One girl we know found a little wooden arrow with a black tip jabbed through the lid of her hat-box when she went to pack on her last night in Havana. But her apprehension dwindled when she discovered it to be white magic, a *ñáñigo* good-will gesture from her hostess' cook, who wished her a return trip swift as an arrow.

Nobody can deny that love of gambling is an outstanding national trait, innate and important in the Cuban nature. Everybody buys lottery tickets; everybody plays the *Bolita*, known in the States as the numbers racket; and everybody plays roulette or chemin de fer at the night clubs and private spots. Everybody gambles at the races. If a Cuban taxi-

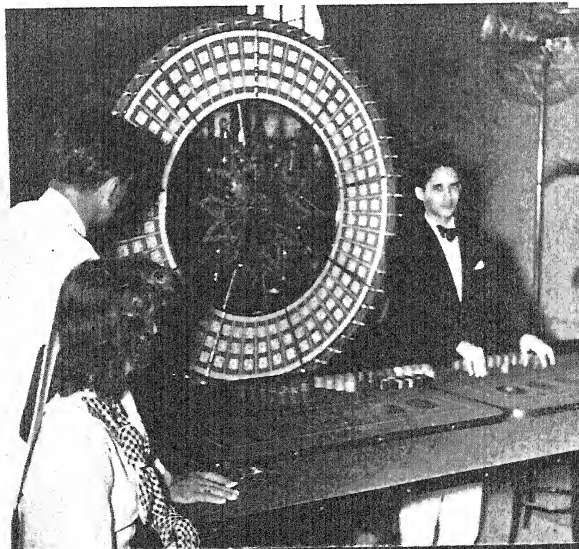


PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS

THE GAMBLERS' PARADISE AND PURGATORY

THE WHEEL OF FORTUNE AT ORIENTAL PARK

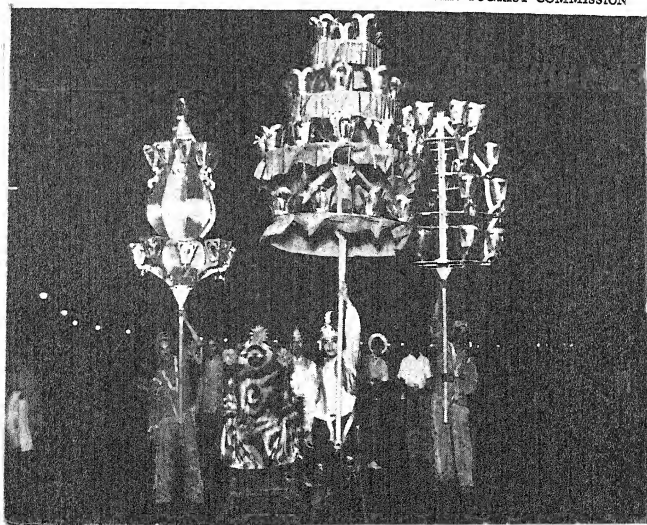
HOTEL NACIONAL





LOUIS HAMBURG  
THE *conga* ON THE STREETS DURING CARNIVAL TIME

CUBAN TORCH-BEARERS IN THE COMPARSAS  
CUBAN TOURIST COMMISSION



driver can't afford to buy a two-dollar ticket on a horse, he'll scout around until he finds nine others; then each will play as little as twenty cents to make up the bet. Just as they bet so much more on sports, so, when they go in for games, it is the gambling aspect of a game that attracts them, rather than the chance to excel in skill. Dominoes, regarded as a fairly innocuous game in our country, here is a complicated partnership affair, involving betting for every play. Each small café you pass at night has its faithful clique of regular patrons grouped around a table, fighting fiercely over their game, with kibitzers *Cubanos* playing an even more active role. Cubans will bet on anything. The big electric sign overlooking Parque Central has dice that change each time the lights flicker on and off, inspiring fast and furious wagers along the sidewalk stands. There is a green-with-age saying about women being like street-cars, one along every minute. In Havana, it is Lady Luck who comes along every minute; natives bet hotly on whether the next trolley car will be red or green.

As another contradiction, we give you the famous Cuban love for ostentation, directly opposed to an equally famous conservatism. When *Señor X* does something, be assured he goes the whole hog. If he gives his wife a diamond ring, it will be an honest-to-goodness rock. If he has assets of a half million, he lives more extravagantly than a many-times richer American. The family mansion will be on Arabian Nights scale, with mother-of-pearl

floors, mahogany-paneled walls, gold-plated door-hinges and at least one mosaic tower somewhere on the grounds. If he maintains several ladies in style, he is the envy of such unfortunates as can only afford one or two.

Even the pets they keep illustrate their love of the exotic. Nothing run-of-the-mill interests a Cuban. Cats and dogs are all over the place, but the more flamboyant varieties are preferred; currently Great Danes are enjoying a vogue. Peacocks spreading their jeweled, fan-like tails are a common sight on even the simplest *finca* (farm); monkeys are not unusual household companions; and a pet shop on Galiano Street offered, as a special pre-Easter attraction, live baby chicks dyed all the colors of the rainbow, from Kelly green to dazzling scarlet. One otherwise sober family we know, dwelling in an extravagant, tower-topped edifice in Vedado, capriciously keeps an honest-to-God American grizzly bear which lives placidly in his cage next to their tennis court. Teddy (actually his name) was smuggled in past Customs inspectors under cover of darkness, as a dog, twelve years ago, and it took permission from the President of the Republic to allow him to remain, but our friends cheerfully went through all this red tape in order to have the distinction of owning one of the three bears in Cuba.

Cubans adore fanfare, enjoy doing everything as gaudily as possible. Even the most insignificant trade or professional association prepares its reports,

lengthily and expensively, in elaborate print jobs. We imagine the question of having an adequate stock of hospital necessities would pale by comparison, say, with the importance of issuing a four-hundred-page book about the glorious founding of the institution, seventy years ago. Though the national clubs originated as low-income-level groups, the rococo splendor of their buildings opulently proves our point. And each time you visit Havana, you find a new beach club, more splendid than the last. Of course, the more clubs a Cuban can belong to, the merrier. It seems a case of not merely trying to keep up with the Sanchezes, but one of eclipsing them entirely!

In all affairs, business or personal, Cubans dote on making mountains out of molehills. Probably the feeling is that anything easily accomplished is unworthy of the individual. "Do it the hard way" is their motto, and their platform is disorganized organization. Consider the occasion when we had an engagement with a principal party-member, an appointment which had finally been made after a full ten days of preliminaries. Our date was for five; while we awaited audience, a small mulatto rushed in and out with cups of black coffee and several underlings danced attendance. From time to time, one of them dashed out to telephone to see if The Great Man was on his way. After almost two hours, we were shifted to another salon, plowing through crowds of petitioners, black, white and yellow, who thronged the halls. There must have been at least

two hundred people waiting to beg political favors; the scene could have been lifted from Louis XIV's court. There followed another hour or so of waiting. Finally someone sidled in to announce impressively that our hour had struck. With great secrecy, so that the waiting mob would not catch on, we were smuggled down a little circular stairway at the rear, past a corps of five attendants at the office door, and, finally, in. Our interview was brief, but at several points during its course a photographer solemnly stopped the proceedings to snap us in conference. Each time this happened, it wrecked our train of thought and then we would have to start from scratch again, but that did not matter. If the discussion were of any significance, it must be recorded for posterity! When our politician wanted something, he buzzed from a highly complicated system of batteries, and each time a different member of the Cerberus squad came tearing in. On the desk stood five telephones, ringing unceasingly during our several hours' session which should have required only a few minutes. When we left, we were whisked out a private gate at the rear. From start to finish, our perfectly ordinary errand was built up and cast in a Mata Hari mood, which was completely unnecessary.

We could go on endlessly, citing incredible tales of the Cuban's love for the grand gesture, but we shall try to sum it up by passing on the story of the gentleman who celebrated the closing of his first



big deal by sending his *querida* a carload, yes, a carload, of silk hosiery.

In direct contradiction to all this is Cuban conservatism, so often unperceived by visitors. Their life is an extremely conventional one, from the care with which young ladies are reared to the aloofness of the home circle. Tradition is adhered to jealously. The European form of training is favored for the scions of Cuban families, and until the recent upheaval in Europe, a grand tour was the conventional finishing touch.

Many Americans see only the café-society aspect of Havana society. Actually, there is still the little bloc of blue-bloods that holds rigidly together and is almost inaccessible. These are the people tourists never meet, the set that rarely frequents cabarets. Stability characterizes their lives; dignity and simplicity are the keynotes of their homes and marriages. Some are enormously wealthy, but nothing *outré* or bizarre is allowed to confuse their existence.

In this chapter, we are considering, rather, the average Cubans, the ones you will have a chance to meet and watch in action, the group that gets around, mixes more with visiting Americans and therefore assumes more Americanisms—not always an improvement.

But whether upper or lower class, hidebound conservative or Dawn-Patrol haywire, observance of outward forms is all-important. When married couples go out in a group, not only do they sit side

by side, but also they dance with one another and only with one another. It would be unthinkable for a married woman to lunch with her husband's men friends, as is done every day in the States. Most of the married men wear wedding rings, no matter how much they stray. And speaking of straying, one of the interesting sidelights to this conservatism is the extremely domestic scale on which even illicit affairs are conducted. There is nothing exotic about extra-curricular activities; they are like additional marriages, and the menage is as settled as a home. The Cuban system of morals is as different from ours as that of any European country. Marriages are not so much the blending of two lives, mentally and personally, as a union contracted to carry on the family name and protect inheritance. It is fairly well taken for granted that a man's interest in the opposite sex is not a whit affected by his married status, and nothing at all is thought of the fact that so many men visit their *queridas* during the twelve-to-two luncheon hour. Where this is the case (and we must emphasize, again, that it is not necessarily typical) Cuban wives are tolerant and philosophical, as they have to be. After all, the man of the house must always come home, in the end.

We cannot emphasize sufficiently the great sense of propriety evident in Havana, in contradiction to sub-rosa activities. When one of us, returning from a date just after midnight, left the hotel to join her companion and Cuban escort at a near-by café,

there were black looks and mutterings. It was a matter of only two blocks to walk, through brilliantly lit streets—and the hour was fairly early—but a Cuban convention had been violated.

Perhaps this was genuinely sincere; perhaps, too, the gentleman's good opinion of himself was involved, for pride is a salient Cuban characteristic. The question, then, would be not only one of the young lady's safety and reputation, but also one of his own good name. So, while enjoying the comfort of being wrapped in cotton wool, frankly we are fairly certain his vanity had a lot to do with his reactions, since vanity is the mainspring of so much Latin-American behavior. First and foremost, comes personal vanity, reflected in the showiness cited earlier. In this category belongs the luxury with which *Habaneros* surround themselves, the fastidious linens they affect, the copious quantities of expensive perfumes in which they bathe. Vanity, too, motivates the elaborate toilettes of the ladies, their carefully cultivated air of being cherished. One of the main reasons we love Havana is because you never see a solitary female there who looks like an old maid. There are no blue-stockings in this city. After all, how can winning a Phi Bete key compare with the art of wielding a fan or the trick of saying everything that should not be said with one's eyes? One of our favorite case-histories on Cuban vanity concerns the fabulously rich gentleman of eighty-three who lived like a king in an enormous pile of white marble off Malecón. He hated day-

light; so he used to sleep all day, arise at four and go on from there, all night. This topsy-turvy existence has nothing to do with the case, but we like it. The point is, one fine afternoon he hanged himself, millions and all, because the dentist had informed him that all his teeth must be extracted! Life without teeth was too much to endure.

There are so many facets to *Cubiche* vanity. When a gentleman of good family has a paramour of lower class, he refers to her not as his "mistress," which would elevate her and make her his equal, but simply as his "roommate." We saw another side, a nationalistic side, when we told a Cuban friend about the revelations made by our man-modiste who was altering some clothes for us. He had told us we were, *gracias a Dios*, easy to fit, being average in proportions. Then he went into a harangue on the difficulties of fitting the Cuban figure, which, like the French, is often short-limbed. Finally, he gave us a play-by-play description of *Señora Fulano*, who was too top-heavy, of *Señorita Fulanita*, whose sway-back silhouette must be camouflaged, and so on. We heartily enjoyed getting the facts about Havana's figures; but when we passed on these tidbits, they were received with a scandalized and outraged air. We were called down in no uncertain terms for having listened. That something Cuban had been torn down, and to foreigners, was unthinkable.

Vanity is evident, again, in the lack of patience with mechanical contrivances. Not understanding

machines, they will not run the risk of cutting a poor figure vainly trying to master some damned *Yanqui* contraption. No *señor* ever swims into a sphere where he is doomed to sink, it appears. Driving one afternoon, our friend backed his Plymouth into a huge rock while turning. There was a resounding crash. We had visions of at least a pancaked rear-end. Finally he collected himself and, wonder of wonders, succeeded in starting the car again. When we timidly asked if he had any intention of checking on the damage, he put us in our places by demanding haughtily why *he* should make himself a slave to any machine!

Yet if your Cuban enjoys self-aggrandizement, is touchy about his honor in almost musical-comedy fashion, there is still something fine and true about this in the collective sense. *Criollos* are race-proud, intensely loyal to their country. This was exhibited for all time in their selfless, foolhardy and dogged fight against Spanish oppression. There is no better gauge of love for *la patria* than the glowing fervor with which they praise their island, the enthusiasm with which they join in the stirring national anthem. They know all the words of theirs, too! National heroes like Martí remain very much alive, and their birthdays, as well as almost all anniversaries of political events, are heartily celebrated with balls and gala dinners, even among the poorer people.

On a par with their vanity is their emotional intensity, where the governing rule again is one of

extremes. Easily angered, your Cuban is just as easily placated. Like a tropical storm, he flies into a tempest of rage which blows over quickly, as is the case so often in political feuds. Latins are all politicians at heart, by the way, and from student days on, they throw themselves into governmental affairs with a fervor unknown in the States, where we tend to let professional politicians run the show. The younger Cubans, especially, relish having their fingers in the political pie, and it was university students who formed the secret ABC organization ultimately responsible for the overthrow of the Machado regime. If he loves hard and hates hard in politics—which accounts for so much blood and thunder on these shores—in his personal affairs the sky is the limit where Cuban emotion is involved.

This brings us to that crucial question: What is Cuban love like? Well, reputedly love is where you find it. You will find it all over the place down there, on a twenty-four-hour-a-day schedule, every day including Sundays. Take it or leave it. We can note, however, that, when a lady says "no" in Havana, there is apt to be less rancor from the man in the mood. It was not to be, his fatalistic philosophy tells him. After all, tomorrow may bring another, tastier dish.

Besides the hot hate of Havana enemies and the hot passion of Havana lovers, there is genial warmth of a more impersonal nature. Kindliness is the largesse Havana hands out generously. You will see it in the almost naïve desire to please, the indul-

gence shown to children, servants. One evening we stopped with a Cuban friend for a final thimbleful of black coffee. Interrupting his discussion of how crazy we were, drinking coffee at such an hour, to buy a paper, he returned *sans* paper but staggering under a load of old books. A refugee had asked him to buy them, he explained, shrugging, "They were so cheap."

Happiness belongs to everyone, the Cubans feel, which accounts for the block-party spirit in which weddings, birthdays and holidays are celebrated. When there is a wedding in a home, it's not at all out of the way for total strangers to drop by, in passing, to offer felicitations. There was one lady we were told about, with scores of friends, who usually has a big reception and buffet on her saint's day. But now it begins to be a financial strain, since the number of guests increases each year. Idly, we asked how many turned out for the last affair. It was a mere six hundred!

Sorrows are also shared, and individual misfortunes are regarded as a community affair. Hospitals all have extra beds in the rooms, to accommodate friends and family of the patients. These throng to kiss and cuddle a new arrival or to commiserate over how many stitches were necessary. They visit at almost any hour of the day or night and, amusingly enough, can receive the same attention, orange juice and all, as the patients. All of this, if you please, used to be on the house, but finally hospital staffs were so overworked by perfectly healthy

visitors that the hospitals clamped down. Now company pays its own way.

At the core of any country's makeup is religion. In Roman Catholic Cuba, although there is much ceremony and ritual, religion seems more a matter of observing outward forms. We observed as much as we could, but, again, our conclusions are based only on what we ourselves saw and therefore are not to be considered final. We do feel that among the poorer people religion is more an integral part of life, and in rustic sections, where diversion is limited, there is probably more genuine religiosity. The church is distinctly the center of community living in country towns, and the priest is looked upon as the leading citizen. Among the well-to-do who can afford to be more frivolous, religion seems to be important not so much for its own sake, but merely because it has become habitual. It is the women who keep religion alive, flocking to Mass in black lace veils, sending their daughters to convent schools, where they learn to make filet lace and rarely get past algebra. Altars elaborately decked in silks and laces, priests in glittering robes, clouds of incense rising—all make the ritual a splendid pageant which reflects a kind of glory on the participant.

Aside from pageantry, Cuban Catholicism is a part of daily living, evident in the prevalence of saints' pictures, crucifixes and shrines in so many bedrooms, the way in which all the saints of Heaven are invoked in the course of everyday conversation.

There was the gentleman sitting in front of us



at the prize fights one night. Glancing casually around, we noticed his hands moving busily all the while his eyes were riveted on the ring. We kept peering to see what he was doing and could scarcely believe what our eyes did see. He was telling his beads so that Heaven would crown his favorite with victory.

Yes, religion walks hand-in-hand with the Cubans. At Easter time people flock happily to see the Passion story at the movies. A whole neighborhood will turn out to follow a grandiose black-and-gold funeral hearse drawn by plumed horses, and the crowd joins in the mourning of the bereaved. In odd contrast to the rigid formality with which the outward forms of Catholicism are observed are the wide-open divorce regulations. Here, again, we must point out that it is the small café-society group which has taken up divorce. This is a minority and a talked-about minority; so it is easy to get the impression that divorce is much more prevalent than is really the case. Among the good, solid middle class, marriages are stable and lasting. However, for the Cubans who want it, divorce can be easy and often. In as little as a month's time, a marriage can be terminated and a new one entered upon. There is one case on record where a divorce was granted within three days. Though the old guard frowns, society takes this development fairly much for granted, and it is not uncommon for flightier members of the younger set to have a couple of divorces in the background before they reach thirty.

While their sense of values parallels ours, Cubans are much cannier. Extravagant as they may appear, they are careful and cautious in financial matters, will rarely take risks and are good enough traders to outfox many of our David Harums. In business, all the etiquette and flowery phrases are summoned, but underneath the blandishments there is a bed-rock layer of hard-headed shrewdness. What aggravates Americans doing business with Cubans is, we suppose, that they are thrown off guard by the highly social way in which business affairs are conducted. The kidding-around preliminaries lull them into anticipating an easy deal; so they are shocked and disgruntled to find Cubans alert and on their toes when it comes to talking cases. Where spending is concerned, they may be prodigal, but most of the time it is not just heedless extravagance; there is always a purpose. When you do see *caballeros* spending freely, it is necessary to maintain position, and they get good value. We wish we were half as clever as our friend who detailed his pet economies for entertaining. In taking guests to dine, he explained, he always ordered for them first a hearty soup-of-sustenance, thick with cabbage, chick-peas, sausage and potatoes. Naturally, after this his guests would be fairly filled up; the rest of the meal would do little injury to his pocketbook.

But if this is the hard-headed side to Cuban spending, there is another. One of the most charming Cuban customs is the way natives lavish time

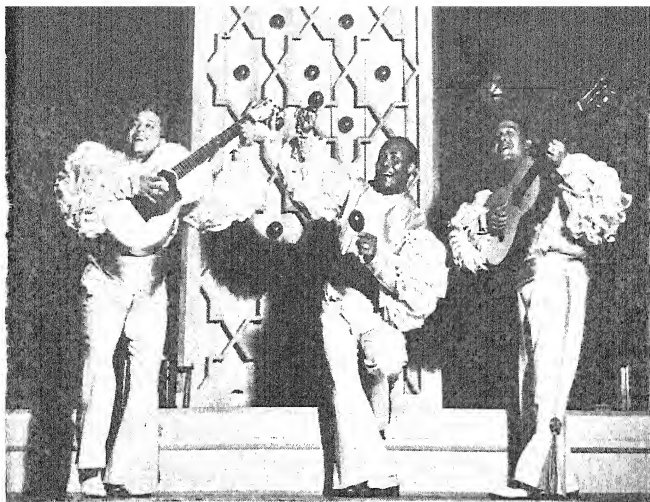
and money on the stranger within their gates, outdoing themselves in hospitality without any thought of a return. When Cubans like an American, the sky is the limit. When you are traveling through the countryside, you will notice the way the poorer people put themselves out to help you. Your problems become their serious concern, and for all this eager interest and attention your "thank you" is all the reward expected.

Money may make the mare go in Havana, but the individual values himself and his pleasure above all else. That is why natives never lose sight of the value of a *siesta*, nor will any affair be deemed sufficiently important to keep an office open after six. Life is short and there is living to do is the credo. The individual's comfort counts heavily. No *señor* would dream of going out in the rain to keep a business date, but if he is having fun, he will keep on until dawn without any worry about getting his eight hours of shut-eye, even though he is past sixty. Time is relatively unimportant; so don't waste your breath railing at what seems a lackadaisical frame of mind. Climate, food, sun—all are allies to indolence. Stay long enough in Havana and you will learn to relax as the *Habaneros* do and let the world go by. They consider it an affront to themselves to hurry, deem it undignified to rush. Blithely ignoring death and taxes, they believe that there is nothing in the world that cannot wait. During the bloody civil war that preceded Machado's overthrow, we understand that by

mutual and unspoken agreement all revolution was suspended on regatta days, which gives you an idea.

Summing up the Cuban temperament is no easy matter. There is such variation to the species. In the city, Cubans are more frivolous, free-and-easy; in the country, they are stalwart and simpler. Our conclusions are purely personal. There is a Cuban walking around to disprove every statement we make, which is something to remember. It all adds up to this: Cubans have the same characteristics we do, traits which are actually international, but differently emphasized. The social and economic systems of our country develop certain qualities that dominate the American character. In foreign countries, including Cuba, where these systems work differently, the pressures on the individual are different, and so personality varies accordingly.

It is easy and American to scoff without attempting to analyze. Loving Havana, liking its people, we don't scoff—but certainly we cannot do much more than make an attempt at analysis. It takes psychologists far more expert than we are to pigeon-hole the Cubans. Remember, our norm of conduct provokes the Cubans into shrugging and saying "*locos Americanos*." Don't pass judgment, then, unless you are ready to stand judgment yourself. And weigh well the words of that old proverb—*Mira al projimo como a ti mismo*—the Spanish ancestor of our own adage, "People in glass houses should not throw stones."



HOTEL NACIONAL

CUBAN TROUBADOURS

NIGHT-CLUB *rumba* DANCER

LOUIS HAMBURG



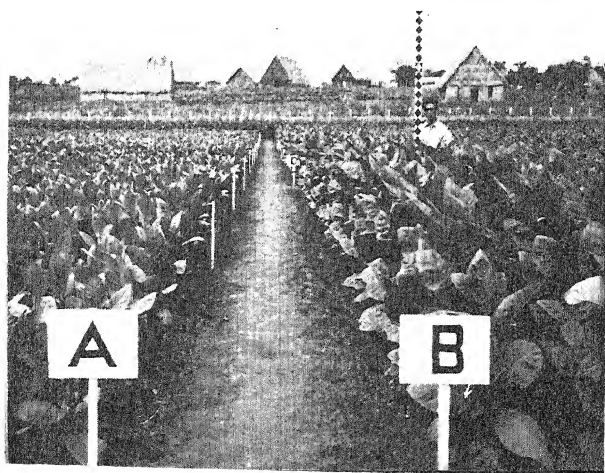


PAN AMERICAN AIRWAYS

A GEOLOGICAL CURIOSITY IN THE VIÑALES VALLEY

TOBACCO EXPERIMENTAL STATION,  
SAN JUAN Y MARTINEZ

PIN INCLAN





## *How to Win Friends— Havana Style*

HAVANA is a bewitching place. It becomes still more bewitching if you participate in the social life of the Cubans. This will be difficult unless you follow the rules of the game. It is unwise to defy conventions, archaic though they may seem. If you are visiting royalty or an internationally known prima donna, perhaps you can brave public opinion and get away with it. But for most of us, bucking the tide does not pay.

Playing the social game successfully, however, requires much more than the mere observance of customs. Cubans are not the unknown quantity most Americans believe them to be. Their reactions are governed by certain definite traits of character. These we have tried to analyze in order to suggest a pattern of behavior. The following guide will, we hope, save you from the necessity of learning via

the tortuous trial-and-error method. Don't try to remodel your Cuban friends; it can't be done. Accept them as they are—"a paradox, a paradox, a most ingenious paradox!"

## LOUDER THAN WORDS

DON'T BE JINGOISTIC. Go with an open mind, remembering that Cuba has a century's lead in tradition and history (it was colonized in 1519; more than a hundred years before our own Founding Fathers landed at Plymouth Rock) and that Cubans are as proud of their country as we are of ours. Don't sneer at the political graft and corruption; understanding the forces involved, you will realize that American business interests have always promoted the conditions which meant a pretty profit for them. The notorious Machado regime, for instance, kept its power long after ninety per cent of the people revolted against it, only through the sturdy support of American bankers. Don't righteously denounce the Army's control of public affairs in the past, but consider that Cuba has been conditioned to dictatorship by four centuries of Spanish oppression. In other words, be tolerant. The American eagle can't always look us square in the eye, though we are strangely apt to forget that fact when in a foreign country.

DON'T BE PATRONIZING. Too many American examine Cubans as specimens under a microscope, as creatures from another world to be dissected for



their amusement and edification. Cubans admire Yankee resourcefulness and ingenuity. They are genuinely interested in you as a representative of all Americans. Return the courtesy.

DO, PLEASE, EXPRESS YOUR ENTHUSIASM IN NO UNCERTAIN TERMS. Cubans are proud of their country, its vivid scenery, its piquant food, its unusual customs. They expand visibly when Americans appreciate them, too. Tourists often earn the reputation of being cold and hard to please. This is the dead-pan school which would rather die than be obviously impressed by anything un-American.

Don't indulge in left-handed compliments, either. Remarks as "You play tennis just like an American," or "This tastes as good as American cooking" (and we've heard them too often) leave Cubans cold. Rather naturally, such comparisons are keenly resented.

DO BE PUNCTILIOUSLY POLITE. Preface all requests with *por favor* (if you please) and don't forget your *muchas gracias* (many thanks). Charm and graciousness are intensely appreciated in Havana, where little formalities play a large role. Not conforming in this respect just strengthens the Cubans' conviction that we are savages. The Latin manner may seem a bit precious and flowery, but we prefer it, any day, to the bluntness affected too often by our countrymen.

DO BE POISED AND SUAVE. An elegant sophistication in appearance and manner is the Cuban ideal. You may be a ravishing little madcap at home but

don't expect the hoyden act to go over in Havana. The tweedy, riding-to-hounds sportswoman or the little-sister stunt also gets you nowhere, fast. In the States, men like "natural" effects; in Havana, it is studied artistry that is appreciated. This doesn't mean that gay young things are unpopular. Far from it. It is simply that even the most wide-eyed ingenue is expected to have worldliness and *savoir-faire*.

Similarly, the cave-man act gets no applause, and a big-brother manner makes any Cuban girl exposed to it regard you as slightly addled. The over-cheerful, back-slapping *turista* gets only quizzical glances. The "smoothie"—man or woman—is the type that Latins admire.

DO CALL OUT YOUR RESERVE and let reserve be your watchword. Don't tell too much about yourself and your affairs. Suggestion is more effective than revelation; allow yourself to be embellished in the imagination of Cuban friends. Don't be stand-offish, but do be a little aloof on occasion; it earns respect.

DON'T GO GOGGLE-EYED WITH EXCITEMENT WHEN YOU MEET WELL-KNOWN PEOPLE. Havana is small-townish in the sense that everyone knows everyone else. Because the going-out area is so small, you may meet local or visiting celebrities. Grace Moore or Ernest Hemingway may wander casually into the Floridita Bar; the Minister of War or the head of the Army may sit next to you at Sans Souci. Take it in your stride if you are introduced to such per-

sonages. Social naïveté is not an asset in Havana.

## CHIPS ON YOUR SHOULDER

DON'T MAKE INSULTING OR DISPARAGING REMARKS ABOUT THE PEOPLE OR THE PLACE IN PUBLIC. Many Cubans speak English fluently (French, too), and your thoughtless words will be understood and give offense. Even if you are suddenly struck by the incongruity of a bootblack stand adorned with fillet lace tidies and a vase of roses (address on request!) or by the weird and wonderful costume of a *negrita*, save the comments until you won't be overheard.

DON'T BE INDIGNANT WHEN CHAUFFEURS, PORTERS AND OTHERS TRY TO EXTRACT AS LARGE A TIP AS POSSIBLE. Usually, travelers are well dressed and have a fairly affluent air; it is not expected they will haggle over a dime. The attitude is reasonable, you will admit. Once it is understood that there is nothing doing, the gold-digging is abandoned and a friendly spirit prevails. Witness: the woman we met who was almost down to her last dollar. On boarding a P & O boat she gave her porter a *peso* from which he would normally take twenty cents per piece of baggage, the minimum charge fixed by law. He hopefully inquired if she would be a sport and let him keep the change. When she explained that she was broke, he gave her an anxious look, audibly hoped her money would last and piously wished her godspeed.

DON'T BRISTLE AND PLAY OFFENDED WOMANHOOD

WHEN COMPLIMENTS ARE TOSSED AT YOU BY PASSERS-BY. If an attractive Cuban girl doesn't hear a few choice comments about her appearance during the course of a walk, she feels she is slipping. As in Europe, appraisals of your personal charm are objective; they are generalizations upon the loveliness of womankind. They become personal only when you choose to make something of it. The nice part of the custom is that, to the Cuban mind, it is a rare tourist indeed who hasn't some talking point.

DON'T BE OFFENDED IF COMPARATIVE STRANGERS INTEREST THEMSELVES IN YOUR AFFAIRS. When the hotel clerk corrects the grammar in your cablegram, he does so not out of sheer presumption, but because he wishes you to appear to best advantage. When the fruit peddler asks how long you are staying, he wants to compliment you as a desirable visitor, not to attempt familiarity. When a man orders handkerchiefs embroidered with the name of a friend, and the salesgirl exclaims delightedly that it is her name, too, she isn't being forward, but is expressing pleasure at the coincidence. Each one tries to make the traveler feel at home. Accept their comments amiably.

## NATURE OF THE BEAST

DON'T DISREGARD THE CUBAN GENIO, OR TEMPERAMENT. You must know how to handle it if your visit is to be serene. When you have in some unaccountable way offended, try to find out how.

You may have to wheedle, but persist. It will keep you from making the same mistake twice.

DON'T EVER, UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES, DO ANYTHING THAT CAN POSSIBLY OFFEND THE DIGNITY OR PRIDE OF A CUBAN. The importance of this rule cannot be overestimated. Dignity is the keynote to Cuban character; ruffle it ever so slightly and you will have an enemy for life. Laugh at him, wound his vanity, deflate his pride, and your friendship is finished. There was the sad incident of the Innocent Young Thing who half-humorously accused our host of neglecting his other guests. Day turned into night. The mild breeze became a raging whirlwind. The gentleman practically erupted. He felt he had lost face because of the Young Thing's remarks, and it took all her powers of persuasion (and they were not inconsiderable) to placate him. And in his own eyes, our host's stand was justified. Exquisite courtesy to anyone who enters his home is the first commandment in a Cuban's code of manners. Even should he transgress, you are regarded as an uncivil barbarian for bringing his shortcomings to light.

Also, should a Cuban indulge in a little humorous self-deprecation, don't be his echo. Your cue is to murmur polite denials gracefully. If you don't, the implication is that you agree—and that would be fatal.

DON'T WISECRACK DURING A SERIOUS CONVERSATION WITH A CUBAN. The Latin mind can't understand the injection of a flippant note into a sober

discussion. Everything in its place is his rule. While no one will be gayer when gaiety is in order, he feels that serious topics deserve serious treatment. He will be affronted if you take them lightly. This, again, relates back to his feeling for dignity.

Don't ever expect him—at any time—to take the ribbing Americans give and get. He can't comprehend it, and though he might conceivably endure such kidding from a countryman, he will be unbearably insulted when it comes from an American.

Then, the pointless school of humor, like that old-time favorite about the lady who rubbed spinach in her hair under the illusion that it was lettuce, is little understood or liked in Havana. Don't indulge in it, if you would have a success. You'll get only pitying stares.

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE CUBANS' HOT-HEADED IMPETUOSITY. We know a case where a young gallant (but not so gallant) asked his American date to stroll in the gardens of the night club. She refused, pleading it would be rude to leave the others. When he stated simply that she had better come quietly or he would make her, the young lady made the fatal mistake of pertly inquiring, "You—and who else?" Whereupon he quietly tipped her upside down, tossed her casually over one shoulder and carted her off, to the great delight of all witnesses. *Moral:* The gentle answer turneth away wrath.

NEVER TAKE IT FOR GRANTED THAT YOU KNOW AND UNDERSTAND A CUBAN. Just when you think

you have an individual neatly pigeonholed, that you know exactly how he and situations involving him should be handled, something completely unaccountable will happen. You are considerably baffled by the realization that you actually don't know any of the answers. Under the influence of the moon and the music your Cuban—man or maid—may pour out his innermost secrets. Don't presume, upon your next meeting, that you go on from there. He may be more distant than ever in an effort to regain what he considers lost prestige. The dignified army officer who, in a moment of weakness, shyly confided that he had psychoanalyzed himself, is a case in point. His confession that "every day from three to five he was very sad" particularly had struck our fancy. So the next afternoon, when he called to take us sightseeing, we archly remarked that this was one day when he would not be sad. It was deflating to have him frigidly inquire what, *por Dios*, we were talking about.

Tread warily in your relationships with Cubans. The safest procedure is to follow their cue for the degree of informality you can safely display.

DON'T BE CRUSHED IF INVITATIONS DIE AT BIRTH. Ten minutes after you meet a Cuban he may suggest a drive to Pinar del Rio to look over his tobacco holdings. Another new friend may discuss a shark-fishing expedition. The beauty you have just met may mention a picnic at her family's sugar plantation. Someone else raves about Varadero and starts planning a week-end house party. *Don't count on a*

*thing*. Never try to force these airy intangibles into concrete actualities. It would be a breach of etiquette. This was chit-chat for the sake of being agreeable. Nice vistas were spread before your grateful eyes. The idea was to make you feel good. The promiser makes you happy with the invitation and is made happy by your appreciation. But don't take such pleasantries seriously. An effort to stir up definite action results not only in sudden elusiveness, but often blights a promising friendship. Your Cuban will probably disappear!

## HIS SISTERS AND HIS COUSINS AND HIS AUNTS

DON'T EXPECT TO BE ENTERTAINED IN CUBAN HOMES, EVEN THOUGH YOU ARE FRIENDLY WITH CUBAN FAMILIES. Even for American residents in Havana, there is little neighborliness, as we know it, except after years of preliminary acquaintance. The Cuban jealously guards his home from contact with Yankees whose radical ideas might prove an undermining, upsetting influence. In his home, the Cuban is king; his prestige is unquestioned; his word is law. By not allowing Americans to penetrate its fastness and to become familiars, by employing that very aloofness we cited before as worthy of cultivation, he subtly keeps you in your place and maintains his own dignity. If you are invited to a Cuban home, accept this as a distinct honor; a tacit admission that you qualify.



DON'T BE HURT IF YOU DO NOT MEET THE FEMININE RELATIVES OF YOUR CUBAN FRIENDS. Don't feel rebuffed if the head of the house accepts your dinner invitation and appears unaccompanied by his wife. Don't think it odd that you never meet that favorite sister of the man who is taking you around, even though he tells you all about her. Cubans permit their women little of the social freedom which they assume as a prerogative, and you are not supposed to question this attitude.

## TIME OF YOUR LIFE

DON'T TRY TO RUN YOUR LIFE ON SCHEDULE IN HAVANA. Relax and go a little Cuban yourself. Walk more slowly, take more time over things. You will last longer. Don't fret when business is drawn out. To the Cuban mind a matter loses its importance if the correct preliminaries have not been observed. There must be a certain amount of to-do over anything worthy of attention. Don't expect to rush through shopping or to execute commissions one-two-three. "These things take time" is the attitude, and there is also the old Spanish proverb, "Make haste, slowly."

DON'T BE SURPRISED WHEN CUBANS ARE NOT PUNCTUAL. Resign yourself to the fact that engagements may be kept from fifteen minutes to two hours later than stipulated. Many Cubans are prompt, but be prepared to encounter just as many with time on their hands and scant respect for it.

Don't be tactless enough to reproach anyone for being late. If you must, joke about their tardiness a little and ask whether future dates should be reckoned on American time or Cuban time. Figure on at least a half hour's leeway, for Cuban time.

DO BE PREPARED TO GO OUT MUCH LATER AND TO STAY OUT MUCH LATER THAN AT HOME. Since dinner is rarely over till nine-thirty, evening activities don't get under way till after ten. Cuban nights are balmy and bright; when the moon is full, she rides higher and sets later than in temperate climates. You have more vitality and you feel like going on, no matter what the hour. Cubans themselves stay up later, possibly because of late rising or the daily *siesta*. Whatever the reason, they never seem to want to go to bed. Bland astonishment will be exhibited should you show signs of human weakness around five in the morning. Adopt the native custom of a nap during the day and you will find the pace less strenuous.

## INSTRUMENT OF THE DEVIL

DO RESIGN YOURSELF TO AN UNUSUAL AMOUNT OF TELEPHONING. Alexander Graham Bell really should be regarded as the patron saint of Havana, where the telephone is not only a convenience, but an integral part of the social system. Cuban women spend hours daily in over-the-wire get-togethers that replace social visits. An elaborate ritual of calls is connected with making dates; so be prepared.

First you get a call which is simply a how-are-you chat. There will be a casual reference to cocktails, later on, but no definite plans are made. This preliminary conversation ends with arrangements for calling again, later in the day. Your cocktail engagement is fixed when the second call comes in, and off you go. While you dally over a *Daiquiri*, the evening's possibilities will be discussed—what you would enjoy doing, where you will dine. It may be seven o'clock by now, but again nothing conclusive is said. "I'll call you again" is the parting note. Duly, the message comes through. So, after three calls and one personal interview, your date is a *fait accompli*.

Don't fret and fume if you are subjected to this procedure. Just chalk it up to the Cuban love of involvement and formality. Stay in Havana long enough and you may get that way yourself.

*Axiom:* If an engagement has been made or discussed a day or two in advance and you haven't been called at least once between-times in confirmation, better make other plans.

DON'T NEGLECT THE TELEPHONE OPERATORS AT THE HOTEL, WHO CONTROL YOUR SOCIAL DESTINY. If you are getting many calls, or are not receiving the messages you expect, gratuities are in order.

DON'T REFUSE TO CALL A MAN EVEN THOUGH YOU DON'T ORDINARILY INDULGE IN THIS PRACTICE. In Havana, as in Europe, less significance is attached to who calls whom. When a Cuban asks you to phone, it indicates interest, and he assumes you

are indifferent unless you follow through. We earnestly do not urge little girls to telephone men indiscriminately, but we do hope this isn't outlawed completely. Why doesn't he call you, instead? Probably he fears you may be busy, your refusal being loss of face for him. But if you call him, then you are free to see him, with no complications. Men are much sought after down here, where they are in the minority. Don't feel squeamish, then, about calling someone once or twice in this land where messages so easily go astray. Sometimes, viewing the lackadaisical manner in which communications are or are not delivered, depending on the bearer's mood, we marvel that that message ever got to Garcia at all. Just know where to draw the line and don't make telephoning a habit.

*Calling all men:* Don't be timid about asking a Cuban girl to call you if she's busy when you try to make a date.

## APPOINTMENT IN HAVANA

DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH PERSONS WHOSE BACKGROUNDS ARE SUSPECT. There is no excuse for this, no matter how bored you become, how naïve you may be. Havana has rigid social castes. Identify yourself with one circle, and you cannot hope to mingle with people in another.

There is a widespread delusion among Americans that Cubans are a mongrel people. This is completely untrue. The real Cuban is either of

pure Spanish descent or a combination of Spanish and French, or German, or Italian ancestry. He probably can trace his lineage farther back than you can. Like other countries, Cuba has its mulattoes but it takes a completely thoughtless individual to suppose that this class represents the true Cuban.

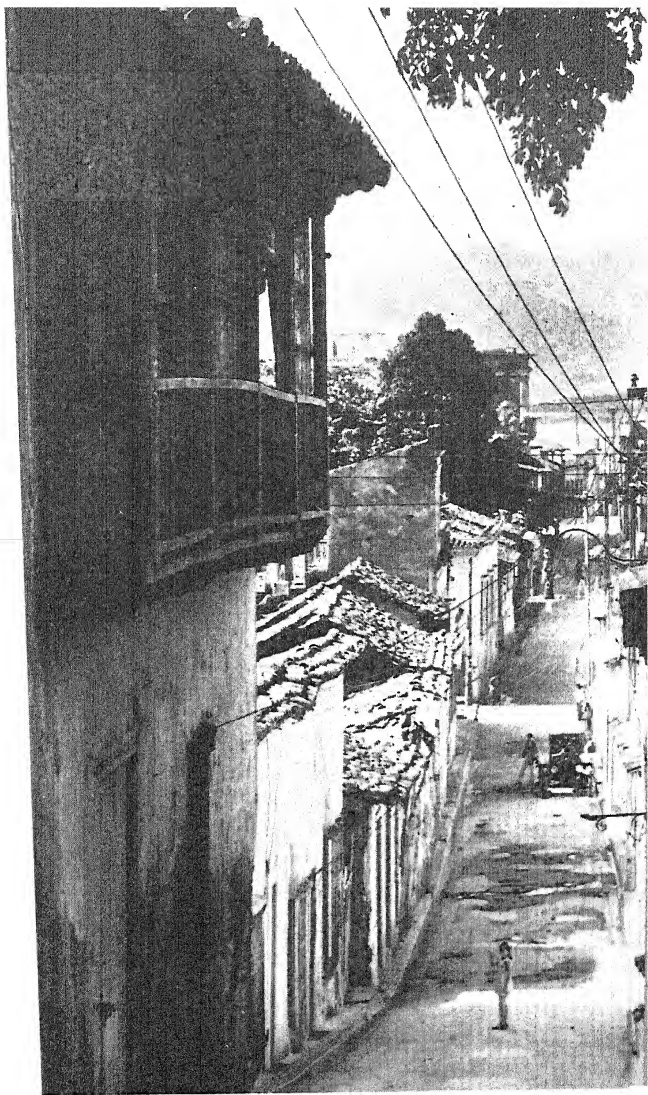
**DON'T PLAY HARD TO GET.** It won't get you anywhere. Independence in women is regarded with definite distaste. *Egoísta*, they dub the girl who uses indifference as a tactic, and they shun her. Don't turn down invitations in the hope that you will be more sought after. The old saw about absence was never so untrue as in Havana, where "out of sight, out of mind" seems to be the prevailing credo. When you are telephoned late for a date that same evening, accept if you are sufficiently interested. Remember that here, seven o'clock is like five at home, and, anyway, you can make last-minute engagements with no loss of face. Don't think that saying "no" is good strategy. The added interest you hope to foster never materializes; your refusal won't inspire a date made in advance next time. There probably won't be a next time.

**DON'T SUGGEST WALKING TO A CUBAN.** On this point, he is a paradox. He is perfectly happy to dance all night or to play several hard sets of tennis, but the idea of walking more than a block (unless at Sans Souci or in some such romantic setting) fills him with dismay. There was the amusing example of the man-about-town who gravely escorted us to his car after dinner at La Zaragozana, then

drove us for café cocktails to La Floridita, just three doors away. Their line of reasoning goes something like this, probably: *you* know you wanted to walk, but passers-by, who don't, may think you are walking out of necessity—that you can't afford to ride, as gentlefolk always do.

DON'T TRY TO RUN THE SHOW. Your friend arranges the evening's program just as he orders a dinner, with forethought and care. He tries to plan a memorable occasion and will naturally resent your attempt to direct activities. Remember, he goes to time and trouble—a contrast to so many Americans who ask what you want to do only because they haven't an idea of their own.

DON'T BE SURPRISED IF YOU MEET THAT OLD AMERICAN INSTITUTION, THE STAND-UP, IN CUBAN MASQUERADE. This may occur in business just as well as in social affairs. Don't rail; try to understand the motivating psychology and summon all the forbearance you can muster. Why were you stood up? Perhaps the person had no right to make the appointment, because of prior commitments, but the intention is always to keep the visitor undisturbed and happy. It would be unflattering not to be agreeable. Maybe the new boatload of tourists included someone more exciting or perhaps a more amusing diversion presented itself. Or else it would be rude for an executive to refuse to see you; that would not be showing due respect. He will go through the motions of making an appointment though he may not intend to keep it. Why not at least let you



ROBERTO MACHADO

STREET SCENE, SANTIAGO DE CUBA

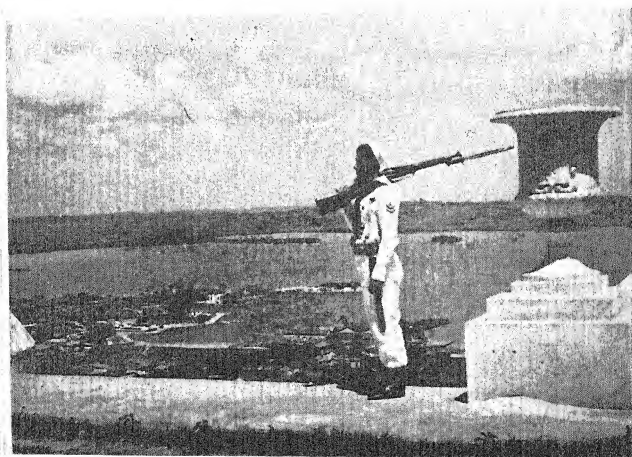


ROBERTO MACHADO

TYPICAL STREET OF A CUBAN PROVINCIAL TOWN

CADET ON GUARD AT THE NAVAL ACADEMY, MARIEL

CUBAN TOURIST COMMISSION





know? Well, it would put the stander-upper in a bad light and it would hurt your feelings. To embarrass you is the sin of sins; so the whole thing is blithely skipped.

DO TAKE STAND-UPS IN YOUR STRIDE AND KNOW HOW TO COPE WITH THEM. There is a good chance you will be studiously avoided; so you won't even have the satisfaction of forgiving divinely. Provided you wish to see him (her) again, you may have to take the initiative. Then, the correct procedure is to assume an unperturbed air, as though nothing upsetting has occurred, and to express disappointment that the expected interview did not materialize. No recriminations, please! If an excuse is proffered, accept it at face value. If no mention is made of the incident, follow that cue, chat airily and make another appointment. If you meet the guilty person accidentally or should he (she) call you, follow the same procedure. In every case you must act as though nothing untoward has happened, if the acquaintance is to continue.

DON'T PIN CUBANS DOWN TO DETAILS WHEN EVASIVENESS IS DISPLAYED. This applies all the way from the case of a broken appointment, when to cross-examine is to kiss the gentleman good-bye, to a dinner party, when you spoil your host's anticipation by insisting on Knowing All and not waiting to be surprised. P.S. For Heaven's sake, as well as the sake of international relations, go into paroxysms of delight when he has arranged a surprise.

## TOUJOURS L'AMOUR, TOUJOURS

DON'T TAKE ARDENT DECLARATIONS OF LOVE TOO SERIOUSLY. Remember that the Cuban's bark is worse than his bite. In his eagerness to please and flatter, he zealously campaigns to make every woman feel that she is the center of his universe; that he is hopelessly smitten with overwhelming desire. Whether she is old or young, ugly or beautiful, makes no difference; his line is always hooked with the same bait. Nibble a little if you want to, but don't, we pray, swallow it whole, or you will discover to your consternation that, by the following morning, your Cuban has completely recovered from his fatal passion.

One young New Yorker in Havana on business tearfully related the story of her date the previous evening with a business acquaintance. After the more or less usual preliminaries, *Señor X* had begged her to allow him to take care of all her hotel bills—for a slight consideration, of course. She hadn't said yes and she hadn't said no. A clever executive, she took no chances of offending *Señor X* before her work was finished. Dramatically she begged our advice. What should she do? What should she say? The business deal might not go through successfully if she turned him down, and turn him down was what she had every intention of doing. From the heights—and depths—of our experience we calmly told her to wait and see what would happen. Later she reported that she was as chagrined

as she was relieved to find a night's sleep had been lost over nothing. *Señor X* had made no further mention of his offer; it was completely erased from his mind. Their business was concluded on such an impersonal note that the whole incident might have been a dream.

Similarly, we suggest that men discount the protestations of dark-eyed Latin beauties who claim to burn with love; that they even take the tender glances so freely bestowed, with a grain of salt. Accept these words and gestures as one of the courtesies of the country, but don't bank on them. Next time you see her, you may have to go back and start from the beginning again.

DON'T BE DISILLUSIONED SHOULD THE DEVOTION YOU THOUGHT WAS YOURS ALONE PROVE TO EMBRACE ANYONE WITHIN REACH. The Cuban's heart is as great as his pride; he has room for all comers. If you are traveling with a companion you may discover your Latin's love is communal—share and share alike. Compare notes, laugh over the incident, but don't tax the gentleman in the case or you will never see him again.

This applies to men, too. That Cuban glamour-girl may be holding your room-mate's hand under the table at the very moment she is declaring her devotion to you. Don't be shocked; two of anything is considered better than one, in any language.

DON'T TALK ABOUT OTHER MEN, OTHER DATES, OTHER CONQUESTS, WHEN YOU ARE WITH A CUBAN. The rule, applicable everywhere, of not prattling

about social success, should be underscored in red for Cuba. Here it is unwise even to mention the men with whom you have business dealings or the most impersonal encounters. Your escort has a tendency to regard you almost as his personal property while you are with him. Play up to this pretense, even though both of you know it is not true. Dragging other names into the conversation tears down the lovely fiction he has contrived, and he considers you extremely ill-bred for doing so.

Should you meet other friends, nod and say hello, but don't desert your host to chat with them. He will resent it for the same reasons. And, of course, we assume you don't need to be warned about the consequences of making a play for another man right under your escort's eye. Latin jealousy is traditional; arouse it and you will have the beginnings of an international incident on your hands.

Cuban girls are every bit as jealous—perhaps more so—than Cuban men, as American swains have found to their embarrassment. So the adage applies for men, too. Don't, when you are out with one girl, mention others. Don't give more than a perfunctory glance to the belle of the next table, no matter how winsome her smile, how inviting her eyes.

DON'T BE OUTRAGED IF MEN MAKE PASSES AT YOU. Remember, you are doing something no Cuban girl of good social standing does. You are flouting convention by going out unchaperoned. Therefore, in the eyes of all but the most eman-

cipated Latins, you are asking for it. The American way of impersonal social life is often incomprehensible to a Cuban. He doesn't understand (perhaps he doesn't want to) that in the States a girl can spend the whole evening alone with a man on a perfectly friendly basis; that nothing but her companionship is expected. Because Cuban maidens are so relentlessly chaperoned, the Latin may take advantage of his rare opportunity with an unchaperoned girl, and try to make hay while the moon shines. Should this occur, playing the role of injured innocence won't help. Your escort may feel that you were well aware of what would inevitably happen and were merely leading him on. Do you want to be taken out more than once by Cuban *caballeros*? Then realize in advance what you may be in for and work out your own technique of fending off undesired attentions. Regardless of your actual excuse for being excused, imply that circumstances beyond your control control you; that you are in the hands of forces which prevent tender reciprocation. Whatever the reason, be sure it is romantic if you would retain the gentleman's interest; if you would have him hope that your "no" means "some other time"; if you would have him come back for more.

Naturally, plenty of men will remain impersonal in their gallantries. We simply are trying to prepare you for what may happen, so that, being forewarned, you won't be forced into ignominious re-

treat, but can plan an ingenious and artistic line of defense.

## FOR MEN

DON'T ATTEMPT TO TAKE OUT CUBAN GIRLS OF GOOD FAMILY WITHOUT A CHAPERONE. This may be an older member of her family (either sex), or an unrelated married couple. Don't even suggest that she spend the evening with you alone. Her parents will immediately suspect you of the worst, and your chance of seeing her at all becomes practically nil. Incidentally, when a chaperone is in attendance, you are expected to pay his or her expenses for the evening. *Note of hope:* Maiden-aunt chaperones often fall into a convenient doze and you can wander off for a *tête-à-tête* in the gardens of Sans Souci or the Casino.

DON'T TAKE OUT A CUBAN GIRL MORE THAN ONCE A WEEK UNLESS YOUR INTENTIONS ARE SERIOUS. This may sound like a precept of the middle eighteenth-hundreds, but remember that in Havana everyone knows everyone else and both men and women are inveterate gossips. The family of a marriageable maiden is diligent in guarding her reputation. Should you pay her marked attentions, knowledge of your intentions and prospects may be demanded.

## FINAL BENEDICTION

Naturally, you won't be embroiled in every merry situation for which treatment is prescribed;

we simply try to cover all possible contingencies.

Whatever you don't understand, whatever *faux pas* you make, blame on the sun spots, or the night air, which, so the Cubans claim, works all kinds of mischief. Come what may, keep your sense of humor, don't get stage fright, retain your perspective, try to earn the description *simpático*, for when natives call you *simpático*, it means you have won a place in their affections.

The most important rule of all is, have fun in Havana, *mañana*. We wish we were going with you.





## APPENDIX



## Glossary

*Abogado*—lawyer

*Aduana*—Customs house

*Ajiaco*—Cuban vegetable potage, as typical as *arroz con pollo*

*Alcaldía*—Mayor's office, City Hall

*Alpargatas*—rope-soled slippers of denim

*Alta*—high, upper

*Americanos locos*—crazy Americans

*Anón*—Cuban fruit

*Aplatánado* (a)—gone native

*Arrollando*—to get hot; go to town (slang)

*Arroz con mariscos*—rice with seafood

*Arroz con pollo*—chicken and rice

*Asilo de Ancianos*—old folks' home

*Avenida*—avenue

*Ay, qué linda*—How beautiful!

*Bacalao*—dried codfish

*Bacalao Vizcaina*—codfish cooked Spanish sailor style,  
à la province of Biscayne

- Baja*—low, lower  
*Balneario*—bathing resort  
*Bandera*—flag  
*Bandolera*—bandit  
*Baños*—baths  
*Barquillas*—pastry cornucopias for dunking in ice-cream  
*Barrio*—city district or ward  
*Bata*—robe  
*Benificencia*—famous Havana orphan asylum  
*Berberechos*—tiny Spanish clams  
*Berros*—water-cress  
*Bocadito*—sandwich  
*Bodega*—grocery store  
*Bohío*—countryman's hut made of palm leaves with thatched roof  
*Bolita*—numbers lottery  
*Bongó*—double-headed drum  
*Bosque*—forest, dell  
*Bougainvillea*—flowering vine, most common Cuban bloom
- Caballero*—man-about-town  
*Cabaña*—beach cottage  
*Café con leche*—coffee and milk  
*Café solo*—black coffee  
*Calamares*—squid  
*Caldo Gallego*—Spanish peasant soup  
*Caliente*—hot  
*Calle*—street  
*Camarero*—chamberman  
*Cangrejito*—pastry *hors d'oeuvres*  
*Cangrejo Moro*—stone crab  
*Cantina*—small refreshment stand  
*Capitolio*—Cuban Capitol housing Senate and House of Representatives

- Catalan*—Spanish style of cooking, from the province of Catalonia  
*Ceiba*—silkcotton tree  
*Cena*—midnight supper, midnight feast  
*Centavo*—cent  
*Centro*—regional association or club  
*Champola*—drink made of fruit pulp and milk  
*Chancletas*—slippers  
*Chayote*—Cuban squash  
*Chirimoya*—Cuban fruit  
*Chorizo*—Spanish pork sausage  
*Churro*—cruller stick  
*Chusma*—crowd, gang. Slang for the common people  
*Ciento en boca*—hundred in a mouthful—name of tiny bananas  
*Ciudad Militar*—military city, home of the Army  
*Claro*—clear  
*Claves*—rosewood sticks, used as musical instruments  
*Coco glace*—cocoanut ice-cream  
*Colorado*—colored, red. Color of best tobacco  
*Comisión General Nacional de Deportes*—Government commission supervising professional and amateur sports  
*Compañera de cuarto*—lower-class mistress; room-mate  
*Comparsa*—dance group, also the *conga* chain gang  
*Conga*—Cuban slave dance  
*Conquistadores*—Spanish conquerors  
*Consejo Nacional de Tuberculosis*—national council for the prevention and cure of tuberculosis; a part of the Government's Department of Health  
*Corazón*—heart  
*Crema*—ice-cream  
*Criada*—maid  
*Criollo (a)*—Cuban  
*Cubiche*—Cuban (slang)  
*Cuevas del Cura*—Caves of the Curate, outside Havana

*Daiquiri*—cocktail made of rum, lime juice and sugar, sometimes frappéed

*Danzón*—old-style Cuban ballroom dance

*Dueña*—chaperone

*Egoísta*—self-centered

*Enchilada*—any dish cooked with spices and peppers

*Estación*—station

*Estación Experimental del Tabaco*—experimental laboratory for the conservation and propagation of finer tobacco

*Estilo academia*—dance-hall style

*Estilo Cubano*—Cuban style

*Estofada*—stuffed

*Fabada*—Spanish bean stew

*Farmacia*—drug store

*Farol*—street lamp

*Farola*—conga lantern twirled in street dancing

*Fiesta*—party or ball

*Finca*—farm

*Flamenco*—Spanish gypsy dance

*Flan*—Cuban caramel custard

*Fonda*—bar, restaurant

*Frijoles negros*—black beans

*Frita*—little round hamburger

*Fruta bomba*—Cuban euphemism for the *papaya* melon

*Frutería*—fruit store

*Gallego*—native of Galicia, Spain. In Cuba he represents the country bumpkin

*Galleta*—cracker. Slang—blow

*Garbanzos*—Spanish chick-peas

*Genio*—disposition, temper

*Golpe*—fancy step. (Actual meaning, blow)

*Gracias a Dios*—thank God!

*Guadaño*—canopied rowboat

*Guagua*—bus

*Guajiro*—countryman, peasant

*Guanábana*—Cuban fruit

*Guayabera*—countryman's all-purpose shirt

*Guayo*—musical instrument, gourd

*Habanero*—resident of Havana

*Habitación*—tenement house, slum

*Helados*—water ice, usually made of native fruit juices

*Highbolito*—Cuban for highball

*Huevos al nido*—eggs-on-the-nest, a special dish

*Huevos al plato*—shirred eggs

*Huevos Malagueña*—eggs cooked in the style of Malaga province

*Impertinentes*—lorgnettes

*Instituto Cívico Militar*—school for children of fathers who died accidentally. Founded by Batista in 1937

*Jai alai*—three-sided wall game played with a ball and a basket-mitt. Originated in the Basque country

*Jota*—Spanish dance

*Lagniappe*—graft

*Langosta*—Cuban lobster

*Langostina*—little lobster; Cuban slang for a lady with ample hips

*La Mazucamba*—traditional ball winding up the fiesta in honor of Our Lady of the Assumption

*La patria*—the nation

*Las Fritas*—roadside honky-tonks (slang, originally used to designate hot-dog stands)

*Lechería*—dairy

*Lechón asado*—roast suckling pig, traditional Cuban fiesta dish

*Maduro*—ripe

- Malanga*—elephant-ear, a root vegetable  
*Malecón*—sea-front avenue. Almost every Cuban city with a harbor has one  
*Mamey*—Cuban fruit  
*Mamonsillo*—Cuban fruit  
*Mañana*—tomorrow  
*Mango*—Cuban fruit  
*Mantilla*—lace head-shawl  
*Manzanilla*—Spanish dry white wine  
*Maracas*—musical instruments made of gourds  
*Margarita*—daisy, woman's name  
*Marimba*—Cuban musical instrument  
*Mar Pacífico*—tropical flower  
*Media Noche*—Cuban club sandwich. Also, midnight  
*Medio*—nickel  
*Mejillones*—Spanish mussels in sauce  
*Mercado*—market  
*Mercado libre*—open-air market  
*Merienda*—afternoon tea  
*Milagro*—miracle. Silver fetish charm  
*Mira al projimo como a ti mismo*—look at others as you would look at yourself  
*Mogotes*—hills  
*Mojito*—a rum Collins, typical Cuban drink  
*Muchas gracias*—many thanks  
*Muy típico*—very typical
- Ñáñigo*—voodoo or voodooism  
*Negrita*—colored girl  
*Noche Buena*—Christmas Eve
- Olé*—Spanish version of bravo
- Paella*—Spanish dish, rice and seafood in casserole  
*Palomita*—wild dove  
*Pan de Flauta*—long, French-type bread  
*Pan tostado*—toast



- Papas rellenas*—stuffed potato balls  
*Papaya*—tropical melon whose name has an obscene connotation in Cuba  
*Pargo*—red-snapper  
*Pascuas*—Christmas (also used for Easter)  
*Paseando*—out for a good time  
*Paso Doble*—two-step  
*Patas a la Andaluza*—Spanish pig's feet stew  
*Patio*—garden or open-air spot around which most Cuban homes are built  
*Pescado papillote*—fish in paper  
*Peseta*—twenty-cent piece  
*Peso*—dollar  
*Picadillo*—hash  
*Pierna*—leg; pig's leg  
*Piña*—pineapple  
*Piña colada*—strained pineapple juice  
*Piña sin colar*—pineapple juice with crushed fruit  
*Pisa y corre*—station-wagon; literally, step-and-run  
*Pisto Manchego*—glorified scrambled eggs, done in the style of Mancha province  
*Plátanos fritos verdes*—fried green bananas  
*Por Dios*—in Heaven's name, for Lord's sake  
*Por favor*—please  
*Pregón*—hot song  
*Premio gordo*—main prize in national lottery; also called *El Gordo*.  
*Procurador*—lawyer's assistant  
*Punto Guajiro*—countryman's chant, ad-libbed
- Qué carita más preciosa*—What an exquisite face!  
*Querida*—beloved, loved one, girl friend  
*Quién sabe*—who knows?  
*Quilo*—penny  
*Quinta*—hospital of a trade association  
*Rancho de mariscos*—mixed seafood grill

- Real*—dime  
*Refresco*—refreshment, fruit drink  
*Reservados*—private dining rooms in restaurants  
*Reyes Magos*—the three kings of Bethlehem  
*Ron*—rum  
*Rosa de maíz*—popcorn; literally, roses of corn  
*Rosquilla*—doughnut  
*Rueda de pargo*—red-snapper steak  
*Rumba*—exhibition version of the son
- Sábalo*—tarpon  
*Sabrosísimo*—delicious, luscious  
*Sala*—hall, drawing room  
*Salchichón*—spicy smoked Spanish sausage  
*Salto de Cama*—negligée; literally, jump-out-of-bed  
*Santa de ojos bellos*—saint with beautiful eyes  
*Santo Entierro*—burial of the Saint; religious procession on Good Friday  
*Se Aquila*, 20—for hire, twenty cents (sign on cabs)  
*Señor*—mister, sir, gentleman  
*Señor Fulano*—John Doe or Mr. X  
*Señorita*—young lady, miss  
*Sesos Grillet*—grilled brains  
*Siesta*—nap  
*Simpático*—charming, sympathetic  
*Son*—Cuban ballroom dance  
*Sonrisa de Dios*—child. Literal translation: smile of God  
*Sopa Tartara*—broth with bread  
*Suavecito*—smooth, with finesse
- Tamale*—cornmeal pudding, packaged in corn husks  
*Tamale en Casuela*—cornmeal dish with meat, in casserole  
*Tasajo*—jerk-beef  
*Tiburón*—shark  
*Tinajón*—pottery urn, originally used to store water

*Tocino del cielo*—extra-rich custard, literally, bacon from Heaven

*Tortilla*—omelet

*Tortilla con ron*—rum omelet, a dessert

*Tortoni*—flaky French ice-cream

*Turista*—tourist (rarely a compliment)

*Turrón*—a Spanish nougat candy imported to Cuba for the Christmas holiday season

*Único*—only

*Vacunar*—catching the partner face to face in a Negro courtship dance

*Vas a echar un pie?*—Are you stepping out?

*Váyase*—Go away

*Vega*—tobacco plantation

*Verbena*—ball or fiesta

*Viejo*—old man (used slangily in the sense of pal)

*Yuca*—Cuban root vegetable

*Zapote*—Cuban fruit

# TRAVEL RATES \*

To Miami by rail:

From	Time En Route	Coach Fares		Pullman Fares **	
		One Way	15-Day Round Trip	One Way	30-Day Round Trip
Atlanta	16 hrs. 5 min.	\$10.40	\$18.75	\$20.75	\$31.15
Baltimore	21 hrs. 46 min.	18.70	33.85	35.85	54.35
Boston	31 hrs. 25 min.	27.90	51.35	49.25	80.75
Chicago	34 hrs. 45 min.	23.25	41.85	43.10	64.65
Cincinnati	27 hrs. 15 min.	17.75	31.95	35.15	52.75
Cleveland	35 hrs. 5 min.	22.85	41.10	43.20	67.55
Detroit	35 hrs. 45 min.	22.80	41.10	43.40	67.55
Jacksonville	6 hrs. 45 min.	5.50	9.90	11.00	16.50
New Orleans	31 hrs. 40 min.	14.75	26.55	29.40	44.10
New York	25 hrs.	22.40	40.35	41.45	65.15
Philadelphia	23 hrs. 17 min.	20.60	37.35	38.75	60.00
Pittsburgh	30 hrs. 2 min.	23.90	42.40	43.75	69.55
Richmond	18 hrs. 20 min.	16.00	28.80	31.20	46.80
Washington	20 hrs. 45 min.	17.90	32.25	34.70	52.05

\* As of June, 1941.

\*\* Cost for space occupied additional.

Longer limit round-trip fares slightly higher.

## FARES (BY AIR) FROM MIAMI TO—

<i>City</i>	<i>One Way</i>	<i>Round Trip</i>
Atlanta, Georgia	\$ 37.25	\$ 67.10
Augusta, Georgia	38.80	70.00
Augusta, Maine	92.60	166.80
Baltimore, Maryland	61.90	111.50
Bangor, Maine	96.50	173.80
Barre, Vermont	92.90	167.30
Birmingham, Alabama	43.75	78.80
Boston, Massachusetts	83.70	150.70
Brownsville, Texas	85.50	153.90
Buffalo, New York	80.25	144.56
Burlington, Vermont	95.20	171.40
Charleston, South Carolina	32.30	58.30
Charlotte, North Carolina	51.30	92.40
Chattanooga, Tennessee	43.80	78.90
Chicago, Illinois	76.15	137.10
Cincinnati, Ohio	65.90	118.60
Cleveland, Ohio	78.65	141.68
Columbus, Ohio	72.85	131.10
Concord, New Hampshire	87.50	157.60
Corpus Christi, Texas	77.50	139.50
Dallas, Texas	75.75	136.40
Dayton, Ohio	68.65	123.56
Detroit, Michigan	83.65	150.62
Duluth, Minnesota	97.65	172.60
Fort Worth, Texas	75.75	136.40
Greensboro, North Carolina	55.85	100.60
Greenville, South Carolina	45.90	82.65
Houston, Texas	67.50	121.50
Indianapolis, Indiana	66.45	119.60
Kansas City, Missouri	92.35	166.22
Los Angeles, California	149.25	268.70
Louisville, Kentucky	59.95	107.90
Manchester, New Hampshire	86.30	155.40
Memphis, Tennessee	57.65	103.85
Meridian, Mississippi	51.25	92.30
Minneapolis, Minnesota	92.65	164.60
Mobile, Alabama	40.45	72.80

<i>City</i>	<i>One Way</i>	<i>Round Trip</i>
Montgomery, Alabama	38.70	69.70
Montpelier, Vermont	92.90	167.30
Nashville, Tennessee	49.75	89.60
New Orleans, Louisiana	47.20	85.00
New York, New York	71.75	129.20
Oakland, California	168.20	302.76
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	67.40	121.40
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania	72.95	131.42
Portland, Maine	89.50	161.20
Raleigh, North Carolina	45.15	81.40
Reno, Nevada	168.20	302.76
Richmond, Virginia	53.65	96.70
Sacramento, California	168.20	302.76
Salt Lake City, Utah	150.10	270.20
San Antonio, Texas	77.50	139.50
San Francisco, California	168.20	302.76
Savannah, Georgia	27.05	48.80
Seattle, Washington	175.15	297.10
St. Louis, Missouri	71.58	128.91
St. Paul, Minnesota	92.65	164.60
Washington, D.C.	59.55	107.30
Wichita, Kansas	102.25	184.12

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